This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

59.

1179.

W. H. O'Brien

London. Published by Henry Colburn. 6ª Marlborough St. 1839.

MY

ADVENTURES

DURING

THE LATE WAR:

COMPRISING

A NARRATIVE OF SHIPWRECK, CAPTIVITY,

ESCAPES FROM FRENCH PRISONS, ETC.

FROM 1804 TO 1827.

By DONAT HENCHY O'BRIEN, Esq.

CAPTAIN IN HER MAJESTY'S NAVY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

M.DCCC.XXXIX.

1179.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY MOYES AND BARCLAY, CASTLE STREET,
LEICESTER SQUARE.

TO

HER MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

QUEEN VICTORIA.

MADAM,

THE honour I have received in the gracious permission to dedicate this work to your Majesty, is a distinguished reward for the long series of almost unparalleled hardships which, it is my satisfaction to say, I have endured in the service of my Sovereign and Country.

It is my greatest pride to reflect, that my life has been hitherto passed (as it is my greatest ambition it should be to its ultimate period), with fidelity and zeal, in that profession in which I have ever most ardently desired to be constantly and actively employed, and of which your

Majesty's august predecessor had so long been the distinguished pattern and illustrious ornament.

His Majesty had been most graciously pleased to accept with his royal favour the Dedication of this Work; but, from unforeseen circumstances, its publication was unavoidably delayed, until the Almighty, in his wisdom, had ordained that our Country should be deprived of its beloved and revered Monarch.

For the distinguished and gracious mark of your Majesty's Royal Condescension, now accorded to me, I most respectfully offer the humble tribute of my deepest gratitude.

And I remain, with the profoundest devotion,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's most faithful Subject,

and dutiful Servant,

DONAT HENCHY O'BRIEN,

Captain in your Majesty's Navy.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOLUME I.

PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR ..... *Frontispiece*
MAP OF THE AUTHOR'S VARIOUS ROUTES.... *to face page* 1
ESCAPE OF THE AUTHOR AND HIS COMPANIONS 249

VOLUME II.

CUTTING OUT THE ENEMY'S VESSELS-OF-WAR AT PORT LEMA ..... *Frontispiece*
CAPTURE OF AN ENEMY'S CONVOY ON THE COAST OF APULIA 246
CAPTURE OF A FRENCH FLOTILLA OFF OTRANTO 270

VIGNETTES.

VOLUME I.

THE AUTHOR CONCEALED IN A BUSH 253
THE AUTHOR ENTERING THE FORTRESS OF BITCHE 401

VOLUME II.

COURT-YARD OF BITCHE..... 4
FORTRESS OF BITCHE, AND LIEUTENANT ESSEL DROPPING FROM THE RAMPARTS..... 6
THE SOUTERRAIN OF BITCHE..... 30

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

The Peace of 1801—Ships of War paid off—The Berschermer—The Amphion—The Duke of Cambridge—Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Lady Fitzgerald, and Family—Passing for a Lieutenancy—Renewal of Hostilities—The Hussar Frigate joins Sir Edward Pellew—Is sent home with Despatches—Wrecked on the Saints—Efforts to save the Ship—Attempts to Escape in the Boats—Dreadful Weather—A Surrender to the Enemy .....

CHAPTER II.

A kind Reception by the Enemy—Hospitality towards the Seamen—Our Shipmates all Prisoners—The last Boat arrives in safety—Consolations under Misfortunes—Prisoners sent to the Hospital at Brest—Robbery by a French Seaman—Running the Gauntlet—Dilemma of wearing or giving up a Sword—The delicate point settled by the Gaoler—Distinction between a Sword and a Sword-Belt—Kindness of the French Nuns—Orders to march into the Interior—Unfortunate Ignorance in ranking the Officers—Wounded Pride and Hard Fare, the Consequences—Bad Faith of the Minister of Marine—Mistake not rectified—The March begins for Verdun—Arrival at Landernau—Aristocratic Differences in Rates of Pay or Allowances amongst Republicans—

Landiviziau—An Illustration of Equality—Morlaix—Belle-Isle-en-Terre—Guingamp—Dishonesty of Inn-keepers—St. Brieux—A Plan of Escape—French Precautions—Lamballe, Rennes—Prisoners, and Vermin—Vitre—English Dogs at a French Inn—Laval—A Spectacle for the Mob—Alençon—Difficulties increased—Part of the Crew separated from their Officers—One part marched *viá* Paris, the other through Rouen—Our Arrival at Rouen—A Gaol in a beautiful City—An honest Gaoler and his amiable Wife—A moderate Bill for Gaol Fare—*Bons Garçons* in a Prison—Our Arrival at Amiens—English Sympathy for suffering Countrymen 17

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Amiens—Arrival at Albert—Our French Officer's Delicacy and Liberality—Differences in the Comforts of the Country—Coal Fires—A Civic Feast at Bapaume—An alternation from Selfishness to English Sympathies—Effects of Champagne on French Aldermen—Sympathies between the French and English People—Hostilities between their Governments—A Change of National Principles and Sentiments between the two Countries in thirty years—A Separation from our kind Conductor—A new Escort—A forced March to Cambray—Pitiable State and severe Sufferings of the Seamen—Entrance into Cambray—A merciless Imprisonment—Starvation and Extortion—Landrecy, Avesnes, Hirson—A Billet upon the Inhabitants—Maubert Fontaine—Rocroy—A brutal Landlord—The Robbery and Abuse of Prisoners—Pitiful Conduct of French Officers—The Village of Fumez—Givet—Charlemont—A Description of the Fortifications—An Escape of Prisoners—A fruitless Pursuit—French Terrors of the English Prisoners—Brother Captives at Charlemont—Generosity of the French Commandant—La Tête de Cerf Inn—Private Lodgings—A Jacobin Landlady—Exhausted Funds—Modes of Living—The 4th of June—Honours done to King George the Third's Birthday—Roast Beef and Plum Pudding—Three Cheers to the King of England—French Terrors of Insurrection—The difference between taking off and only touching Hats in saluting

Men in authority—A woful difference to the Imprisoned—An awkward Confinement—Good News—A joyful Departure in a Cart for Verdun 54

CHAPTER IV.

Our Arrival at Fumez — Liberty of Action — Rocroy, Mezières — A French Landlady—Sedan, Stenay, Sivry—Our Arrival at Verdun —A Joyful Reception—General Wirion—His Indulgence towards the Prisoners—The Meetings of old Shipmates and Friends—The studying of French, Italian, and Fencing—Mental Employment the best Antidote against *Ennui* and Dissipation—The cruel Transportation of the Acasta's Boat's Crew from Brest to Verdun —Restiveness at Confinement—Anxiety to be again in the Active Service of Old England—Meditations upon an Escape—Contrivances to avoid a Breach of Parole or any Breach of Honour, private or national—Providing Necessaries for the Elopement and Journey—Three Comrades, or *Compagnons de Voyage*—Scaling Ramparts—A Descent of Seventy-two Feet—The Open Country —The March commences—The course by Compass and Map, *north-west*, for Estaples, on the Coast—Flying by Night, and hiding in Woods by Day—Heavy Rains, dismal Roads, and swampy Beds, with bad Fare and good Hearts — Leaping a Moat—A dislocated Knee—Great Sufferings—Terrors of not being able to proceed—Fidelity and Magnanimity of Friendship— The March resumed, and pursued lamely—A Wrong Course, and Time lost—The Town of Nieuville—Long Privation of Water— Extreme Sufferings from Thirst—A Poisonous Ditch—Water at length procured, Anguish allayed, and the Escape proceeded upon with renewed Spirits..... 89

CHAPTER V.

The Journey pursued—An unexpected Danger dexterously avoided —Montcornet—The River Serre—A Bivouac in a Wood—Dangers of being Shot—Making free with an Orchard—Crossing the Oise—A Want of Food, with no Commissariat—A Mode of

obtaining Provisions—A Cabaret and a Village Fête—Kindness of the Peasantry—Wretched Illness, Deluges of Rain and Nightly Bivouacing found to be inconsistent—Petit Essigny—Wringing drenched Garments, and Drying them over fading Embers—A Hovel—Luxuries of a Hay-loft—A Samaritan of a Hostess——Wretched Sufferings of Mr. Essel—Resort to another Village—A kind Landlord—Sympathies of Deserters—"A fellow-feeling makes Men wondrous Kind"—The Luxuries of a Clean Bed after the Mud Beds of Bivouacs—Resort to another Village—A Motherly Hostess—Poor Essel's extreme Sufferings—A lucky Road-Acquaintance—An excellent Specimen of human Nature—Virtue and Happiness in humble Life—The charitable Baker—Dangers from Sportsmen to Gentlemen hiding in Woods—Mr. Essel's Illness disappearing—Increased Speed not always safe to Fugitives—Coldness of the Weather—Town of St. Pol—An hospitabl Farmer—A French Harvest-Home—Hesdin—Passing a fortified Town at Midnight—Nieuville—Estaples—Turned out of a Straw Bed—A new Inn, with a *Gen d'arme* in Disguise in the Kitchen—Trepidation—A Search for Money—Bribing a Landlord—No Boat to be had—An old Shepherd too cunning for a young Lieutenant and Midshipmen—The escape from a Traitor's Den—Extreme Difficulties—High Hopes—Another Traitor—Despondency and Resources 130

CHAPTER VI.

A False Direction, and an appalling Repulse—A Bribe refused—Preference of a Pig-sty to a Night-storm—A Deluge, and Shelter in a Barn—The Luxury of a Bed of Hay—A Fatal Resolution—Dangers of Fugitives journeying by Daylight—A Market-day at Estaples—Passing through Crowds not very convenient for runaway Prisoners-of-War—An Attempt to reach the Sand-hills on the Coast—Desperate Circumstances, and the *Nil Desperandum*—A Bold Progress through a Despicable Village—The last House—Parching Thirst, and begging for a Draught of Water—An Acquiescence, or Reply, in the shape of two Custom-house Officers A close Capture—A clever Fiction well devised, better sustained,

and totally defeated—Getting rid of Suspicious Goods—A Contest of Politeness and Good-breeding—An Examination before the Mayor—Americanism, and the American Gentleman—An Awkward Exposure—Clever Schemes blown to Atoms—A *Mittimus* to Boulogne Gaol—An Examination of our Persons and Clothes—Our Fate sealed, and Hope destroyed 185

CHAPTER VII.

Our Entrance into the Gaol of Boulogne—A Sheaf of Straw for a Bed for two people not a luxury in a gaol, though it might be in a loft or barn—Tantalizing Sight of Old England's Flag and white Cliffs—A Gaoler's Supper and a conscientious Bill—Another Examination—A Route to Verdun—The Gaol of Montreuil—A Selfish Englishman—Arras and Englishmen Kind and Liberal—The Gaoler Kind, and the Commandant full of Indulgence—Bapaume—The Baker, and Inquiries for our lost Money—Cambray——Château Cambressi and its horrible Dungeon—Landreci—Our Awkwardness in Chains, Handcuffs and Fetters—Gentlemen not used to Handcuffs—My dislike to them—Avesnes—Information that we were to be Shot—English Spies, and French Antipathy towards them—The Dungeon of Avesnes—A Dungeon Companion, who had killed and cut up both his Parents—A night of Horrors and Lunacy—Hirson, a Town without a Gaol but with a Dungeon—An unfortunate Distinction—A Supper and its Consequences—The Discovery of our Implements of Escape—A double-barrelled Pistol passed off as a Substitute for a Tinder Apparatus—Maubert Fontaine—Extreme Severity against us—A new Dungeon and a Fellow-prisoner—Reciprocal Services—A novel Mode of hiding Pistol-barrels—English Kindness and French Fury—Chaining Prisoners to a Cart—Mezières—Arrival at Verdun—Separated from my Companions—Reflections on being Shot—A close Examination—Questioned in relation to Buonaparte—Allowed to join my old Associates—Our general Joy—Another Cross-examination—A Re-committal to Prison—Our Fate determined—The Dungeons of Bitche—Our Punishment for our attempted Escape—The Rev. Lancelot C. Lee, a *détenu*—His Generosity—A suppl of Money when quite penniless 207

CHAPTER VIII.

Our Departure from Verdun for Bitche, the Bastille of the Condemned —A Mounted Guard—Thoughts of an Escape—Calculations upon a Chase in a Wood between Horse Soldiers and Prisoners on Foot —Chances of Escape—Attempt resolved upon — Signal given— Flight from the Prison Caravan to the Wood—French Pursuit— A Prisoner Recaptured — *Sauve qui peut*—My Escape from the Wood into another—My Companions, I fear, less fortunate—The whole Country alarmed, and the Peasantry in pursuit—An Islet in a River, well wooded—My Concealment—A swampy Bed and a stormy Sky, with a Torrent of Rain, for a Canopy—A pitiable Condition, and a prospective Flight of nearly 800 Miles—The Misery of a fruitless Search for lost Companions — Feeding on Haws, and herding with Quadrupeds and Vermin—A Hut discovered — Hunger compels me to enter—Extreme Danger of Seizure—A Compromise, a Bribe, Female Advocacy, and an Escape—On the Road to the Rhine—Suspicious Guides and serious Alarms—Hiding Property—A Preparation to sell Life dearly—A narrow Escape—Living on Cabbage-Stalks and raw Turnips—Bad Feet and worse Health—A lonely House near a Wood—A Blazing Hearth seen through the Windows, and Torrents of Rain felt outside—Strong Temptations to Enter—A brutal Host, extreme Danger, and a narrow Escape—Bad Specimens of Human Nature—An awkward Dilemma and a painful Sacrifice for want of Change—The Handkerchief and the Glass of Brandy, or *Snique* 244

CHAPTER IX.

An Inclement Season—A Retreat in a Cavern—Difficulties of climbing Rocks in the dark, and greater Difficulties of descending— Somnambulism—The Discovery of a Shepherd's Hut—A Traveller put out of a Wrong Road—Swimming in a Winter's Night— Passing through a Mill—A Suspicious Traveller may be an Honest Man—Ingenious and Unsuccessful Fiction—A Lorrain Cottage seen through a Fog—Dangers from over-kind People—Repug-

nance to be Introduced to a Mayor, or any other good Society—The Necessity of Decamping from Good Quarters, and the Convenience of a Night Concealment in a Hollow Willow—An Honest Fellow-traveller of Fugitive Reminiscences—An Ingenious Fiction—A Perspective of Strasbourg 276

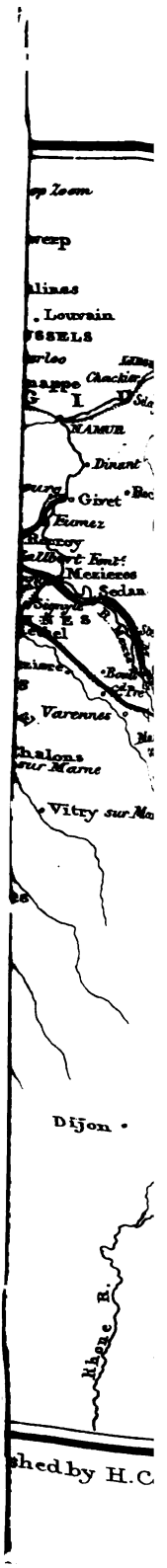
CHAPTER X.

The Banks of the Rhine—Contemplations of crossing the River irregularly—Difficulties of finding a Legal Passage—Mistaking two armed Officers for two harmless Fishermen—An appeal to Feelings, and a National Assurance of Patriotism—Cattle crossing the Bridge of Khel—An Intermixture with the Cattle, and a Passage over the Rhine—Joy of being out of France, and Blessings of being in Germany—A Progress towards Friburg—A German Village—Contrast between a warm Feather Bed, and Bivouacing in the Mud—An Innocent Landlord clever at a Guess—Another German Inn, and a luxurious Breakfast—An Escape round Friburg—A Substitute for a Candle—A Night's Rest—En Route to Constance—A Village Inn—A Countryman for a Waiter, and a long Gossip upon Personal Histories, and Native Places—Mistaking a Nobleman's Mansion for a Village—The Inconsistencies of Superstition and Hunger—A numerous Progeny—My Approach to Constance—Effects on the Mind produced by its magnificent Scenery, and beautiful Lake—Crossing a Branch of the Lake Constance—Leaving the Kingdom of Wirtemberg, and entering the Kingdom of Bavaria—Enmity against the French—A Night's Rest in a Bavarian Village—La Route to Lindau—Out-marching an Enemy—The gate to Lindau—Successfully passing the Sentinels—Elation of Spirits—An awkward Querist—Unsuccessful Invention—A Capture—Examination and Imprisonment—Bitter Reflections upon my cruel Destiny—The Vista of Hope, and a fancied Prospect of another Effort to Escape 308

CHAPTER XI.

A fresh Incarceration—Stripping a Prisoner naked, a more effectual Detainer than Chains and Padlocks—Distracted Thoughts and raving Dreams—Hopes of Escape prove delusive—Gaol Surgery,

and Gaol Diet—A Swiss Prisoner for Debt—A timely Loan of Books—Dreadful Effects of Solitary Confinement upon Youth—A short Visit from the Swiss Captive—Orders to prepare for a Return to France—A heavy Chain and huge Padlock—Fruitless Remonstrances—The Mob at Lindau—Leave-taking between a Prisoner and the Gaoler and Gaoler's Wife—Gazing at a departing Prisoner—The Road to France—Going to Bed in Chains—Our Progress on the Road to Strasbourg—Strict Watchings—Chances of a Rescue—Anticipations of the Horrors of Bitche—Commiseration of my Guards—Reflections on the German and French Characters—Crossing the Bridge of Khel—A Surrender to to the French *Gens d'Armes*—Captivity in the Military Gaol of Strasbourg—A bitter Frost and a damp Cell—Proposal of a Fire—A ready Acquiescence, but an Empty Purse—A kind Gaoler and as kind a Wife—His Gratitude for English Kindness when a Prisoner-of-War—A sudden Transition from Misery to Comfort—Examined by the Police—Affectionate Leave-taking of the Honest Gaoler and his Wife—On the Road to Bitche, heavily chained to eleven Corsicans going to suffer Military Execution—The Horrible Dungeon of Nider-Bronn—A revolting Night's Confinement—Brutality of the Guard—Dreadful Sufferings of two of the Corsican Soldiers—Distant Prospects of Bitche—Depression of Spirits—Anticipations of a cruel Confinement—Arrival at the Fortress .. 367


op Zoom
Louvain
Dinant
Givet
Mezieres
Sedan
Varennes
Chalons
sur Marne
Vitry sur Ma
Dijon
Rhone R.
shed by H.C

Meaux
Lagny
Coulommiers
Provins
Montereau
Fontenay
Sens
Joigny
Auxerre
Tonnerre
Avallon
Semur
Arnay le Duc
Beaune
Chalon
Autun
Dijon
Langres
Chatillon
Bar sur Seine
Troyes
Nogent
Arcis
Vitry
Chaumont
Bar sur Aube
Bar le Duc
Joinville
Vaucouleurs
Commercy
Toul
Nancy
Pont a Mousson
Metz
Thionville
Longwy
Montmedy
Sedan
Rocroy
Mezieres
Charleville
Rethel
Laon
Soissons
Chateau Thierry
Meaux
Paris
Versailles
Dreux
Evreux
Pontoise
Mantes
Gisors
Rouen
Caudebec
Dieppe
Havre de Grace
Honfleur
Pont l'Evesque
Lisieux
Caen
Bayeux
Falaise
Vire
Coutances
Carentan
Valognes
Cherbourg
Granville
Avranches
Mont St Michel
Pontorson
Fougeres
Vitre
Rennes
Dol
St Malo
Dinan
Montfort
Redon
Chateaubriant
Ancenis
Nantes
Clisson
Machecoul
Paimboeuf
Guerande
Croisic
Le Pouliguen
Le Pilier Rouge
Le Four
Noirmoutier
Pont de Noirmoutier
Beauvais
Clermont
Compiegne
Noyon
Roye
Montdidier
Peronne
Ham
St Quentin
Guise
Vervins
Hirson
Rocroy
Mezieres
Sedan
Montmedy
Longwy
Thionville
Metz
Pont a Mousson
Nancy
Toul
Vaucouleurs
Commercy
Joinville
Bar le Duc
Bar sur Aube
Chaumont
Langres
Chatillon
Bar sur Seine
Troyes
Nogent
Arcis
Vitry
Joigny
Sens
Fontenay
Montereau
Provins
Coulommiers
Lagny
Meaux
Paris
Versailles
Dreux
Evreux
Pontoise
Mantes
Gisors
Rouen
Caudebec
Dieppe
Havre de Grace
Honfleur
Pont l'Evesque
Lisieux
Caen
Bayeux
Falaise
Vire
Coutances
Carentan
Valognes
Cherbourg
Granville
Avranches
Mont St Michel
Pontorson
Fougeres
Vitre
Rennes
Dol
St Malo
Dinan
Montfort
Redon
Chateaubriant
Ancenis
Nantes
Clisson
Machecoul
Paimboeuf
Guerande
Croisic
Le Pouliguen
Le Pilier Rouge
Le Four
Noirmoutier
Pont de Noirmoutier
Beauvais
Clermont
Compiegne
Noyon
Roye
Montdidier
Peronne
Ham
St Quentin
Guise
Vervins
Hirson

ADVENTURES,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

The Peace of 1801—Ships of War paid off—The Berschermer—The Amphion—The Duke of Cambridge—Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Lady Fitzgerald, and Family—Passing for a Lieutenancy—Renewal of Hostilities—The Hussar Frigate joins Sir Edward Pellew—Is sent home with Despatches—Wrecked on the Saints—Efforts to save the Ship—Attempts to escape in the Boats—Dreadful Weather—A Surrender to the Enemy.

Of the various sufferings and vicissitudes experienced by individuals, as well as by nations, in consequence of the peace, or rather the cessation of hostilities, with France, under the government of the first consul, Napoleon Buonaparte, in October 1801, I had dispensed to me

an ample share, though at that period I was but an humble midshipman, anxious to complete the period of six years' service to qualify me for passing for a lieutenancy. My misfortunes seemed to be intended as a prelude to the sufferings which fate was to inflict upon me, when I fell within the iron grasp of the usurper, and under the system of his tyranny.

In the course of a very few months, two ships of war, on board of which I had the honour of serving, were in rapid succession laid up in ordinary at Chatham; in the first, I was present at the surrender of the Dutch fleet in the Texel, under Admiral Story, in 1799. The latter was the Berschermer, of fifty-four guns, commanded by Captain Alex. Fraser. From her I joined the Amphion frigate, of thirty-two guns, which was then fitting out in the Medway, under the command of Captain R. H. Alexander Bennett, to whom I was recommended by my early patron, Captain Edward Walpole Browne, of the navy, now a rear-admiral.

Early in the ensuing spring (1802), Captain Bennett, upon his application, was superseded, and his successor was my late officer, Captain Fraser, who joined us at North Yarmouth, whence we had the honour of carrying His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge to Cuxhaven. His royal highness was very affable and kind to the officers, and endeared himself to all on board.

On returning to the Nore, we had orders to cruise for some weeks in the British Channel, for the suppression of smuggling. After a short period, Captain Fraser, upon his application, was superseded, and Captain T. M. Hardy (now Governor of Greenwich Hospital) was appointed to the command of the Amphion. Under him, in the autumn, we carried out Lord Edward Fitzgerald (with Lady Fitgerald and their family) on his embassy to Portugal; and, on the 10th of December, we returned to Spithead.

In the following month (January 1803), I completed my six years of service as a midship-

man, and, with the approbation of Captain Hardy, I proceeded to London; where, having passed for a lieutenancy at the Navy Office, I rejoined the Amphion in Portsmouth Harbour.

In the ensuing month of February, the Amphion was reduced to the peace establishment, and very much to my regret, for I felt sincerely attached to the ship, to the officers, and to all on board; but more especially to my messmates, the Hon. Josceline Percy, Robert Blakeney, John Bingham, W. Edward Fiott, Charles Hare, &c., and to Lieut. George Matthew Jones,* from whom at all times I had experienced great kindness. Through the influence of an old and valued friend, Capt. John Langdale Smith, I was

* The name of this excellent officer and accomplished gentleman will often appear, and to his honour, in the succeeding pages of this work. Captain G. M. Jones was impelled, by his active and intelligent mind, to travel over the Continent, after the peace of 1815; and in 1827 he published two octavo volumes of his travels, in which he affords invaluable information on the states of Hanover, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia, Turkey, and Italy. His account of the state of Russia in the Euxine was most important, and subsequent events have proved its excellence.

now removed to the Hussar frigate, of thirty-eight guns, then commanded by Capt. Philip Wilkinson (now vice-admiral of the red), and lying at Sheerness.

Upon the renewal of hostilities in March, 1803, we were promptly and well manned, by means of impressment; and we proceeded to cruise in the Bay of Biscay, and in various parts of the Atlantic, until Capt. Wilkinson received orders to join Sir Edward Pellew's squadron off the Spanish coast. In this ship I was one of the master's mates, or a senior midshipman.

It was on Monday, the 6th February, 1804,

The death of few men ever occasioned more regret amongst a greater number of friends. Captain George Matthew Jones was brother to Sir John T. Jones, Major-Gen. of the Royal Engineers, and of Lieut.-Col. Jones, a distinguished officer of the Artillery. He was posted Dec. 7, 1818, from H. M. sloop Pandora, of eighteen guns, and died at Malta on Friday, April 29, 1831, when on the eve of returning home, after suffering with Christian resignation and fortitude a long period of severe indisposition.

that the Hussar made sail from the commodore in Ares Bay in Spain, being bound for England with despatches, and with orders, first, to communicate with our channel fleet off Brest. We had a fresh breeze from the S.W.; and on the succeeding day (Tuesday, 7th), the wind and weather were nearly the same. At noon, to the best of my recollection, we were in lat. 46° 50′, Ushant bearing N. 37° E., distant 113 or 114 miles.

On Wednesday (8th) the wind and weather were the same, and we were steering, as nearly as I can recollect, N.E. by E., and running nine knots an hour. Every heart was elated with the joyful expectation of being safely moored in a few hours in the land of liberty. Some were employed in writing to their friends and relatives; but, alas! how frail and delusive are the hopes of man! How differently had our lot been decreed! The happy arrival, with many, never took place. With all the others

it was long delayed; and the vicissitudes and miseries we were doomed to suffer, will amply appear in the subsequent pages.

It was on this fatal Wednesday, at about 10^h 45^m P.M., whilst steering this course of N.E. by E., and running at the rate of about seven knots an hour, in dark and hazy weather, the Hussar struck upon the southernmost point of the *Saints*. We beat over an immense reef of rocks, carried away our tiller in several pieces, unshipped the rudder, and, from the violence of beating over the reef, we damaged the ship's bottom so considerably, that the leak became very serious. At length we got into deep water, and let go our bower anchors, to prevent being dashed to pieces on the immense rocks a-head. We got our top-gallant yards and masts on deck, and used every possible means to lighten the ship. The greater part of the crew were kept at the pumps; whilst the remainder, with the officers, were employed in staving the water-casks in the hold, in shoring the ship up,

as the ebb tide was making and she was inclining to starboard, and in doing all that was deemed expedient to the safety of the ship. All was unavailing. The carpenter reported that she was bilged; and we could distinctly hear the rocks grinding and working through her, as the tide fell.

At daylight, Mr. Weymouth (the master) was sent to sound for a passage amongst the rocks, on the supposition that we might be able to buoy the ship through; but he returned without success; though, had he accomplished it, from the state the ship was in, there could have been little hope of getting her out. A division of the seamen and marines, with their respective officers, was then ordered to take possession of the island, that, in the last extremity, there might be an asylum secured for the men and officers. The rest of the crew remained at the pumps, but with no success, as the leak kept gaining upon them. The island was taken without any opposition, the only people

on it being a few distressed fishermen and their families.

About eleven A.M. we began to land the crew, no hopes remaining of being able to save our ship. However, the remainder of the people kept still working at the pumps, waiting the return of the boats. At noon, the flood making strongly, and we fore-reaching* withal, Captain Wilkinson gave directions to let go the sheet-anchor, which was immediately done. Strong gales from S.W.

February 9th.—By about one P.M. every body was safely landed, with two or three pigs and some biscuit, which were the only subsistence we had secured. Captain Wilkinson and Mr. Weymouth came in the last boat. At about 1^h 30^m Lieut. Pridham, with Messrs. Carey, Simpson, and Thomas (three warrant-officers), and myself, were ordered by the captain to return to the ship, to cut her masts away,

* Drawing a-head.

in the afternoon, we bore up again. Several of the boats were in distress, being very badly found, having neither sails, rigging, nor ground tackling that could be at all trusted to. Lieuts. Pridham and Lutwidge (who remained prisoners of war until the peace of 1814, when the allied sovereigns entered Paris, and Napoleon abdicated his throne and was exiled to Elba), and Lieut. Barker (who was afterwards killed in a duel at Verdun), were to keep a-head, as no other boat had compasses. At about five, in a very severe squall, with rain, we lost sight of the barge. Every body in our boat was of opinion that she had been upset; and at $5^h\ 30^m$, it blowing extremely hard, with a heavy shower of rain, we lost sight of all the boats. At about six, we observed St. Matthew's Light* on the weather bow. The wind now chopped round to the N.W., in a very heavy squall, which carried

* Pointe St. Matthias, on the left upon entering Brest; a picturesque point well known to our officers employed on that station.

away our mainmast in the step* and fore-tye,† very nearly swamped us, having almost filled the boat with water. We chipped the heel of the mainmast, restepped it, and rove the main-tye and halliards forward, which enabled us to set the foresail, and keep scudding‡ before the wind to Rock Fort, with the expectation of falling in with some of the other boats; but in this we were disappointed. At eleven, we determined to anchor at the bottom of Bertheaume Bay, though with very little or no hope of riding long, our only ground tackling being a small grapnel, and a very few fathoms of one inch and a half rope.

We providentially succeeded in bringing up, though we were, unfortunately, too near the shore, and most miserably situated: the weather tide, running strongly against a violent gale from

* Step, that part of the mast that fixes in the boat.

† Fore-tye, the rope which the fore-sail is hoisted up by.

‡ Scudding, running before the wind.

the N.W., occasioned such a sea as to bury us frequently in its abyss.

At two A.M., the sea breaking in a most terrific manner over us, and finding that we were driving* and almost touching abaft, expecting every second to be dashed on the rocks astern of us, we hauled in briskly on the grapnel rope, hoisted the foresail and wore round, paying out the grapnel rope just hauled in, until we brought it right over the quarter, which enabled us to get our grapnel on board with ease; while we stood over to the Camaret Bay side,† in the hope of falling in with some little haven to shelter us, or with one of the other boats; but we were disappointed in either expectation.

At about $4^h\ 30^m$, finding we advanced towards Brest Harbour considerably, we resolved to try

* Driving is when the anchor does not hold.

† This was the bay in which the Chevrette lay (a French sloop of war) when she was cut out by our gallant tars in 1801; — a most desperate and determined affair.

the grapnel once more; although we were not in the smallest degree sheltered from the inclemency of the weather, and were placed immediately under a fort, which we distinguished by its lights, that enabled us to see the sentinels on their posts walking to and fro. We made, if possible, worse weather here than at our former anchorage, with the exception that the grapnel held. At $7^h\ 30^m$, the wind and weather became more inclement than on the preceding night. Not a boat of ours was in sight, every minute we expected to be hailed by the fort, and not a soul amongst us could speak a word of French. We were almost perishing and starved from the fatigue and sufferings of the night, the few provisions we had being totally destroyed by the salt water. Seeing no alternative, but the pain and mortification of delivering myself and my boat's crew prisoners of war, I came at length to that resolution. Accordingly, I ordered all the small arms in my boat to be hove overboard, and

at eight cut the grapnel rope, and ran into Brest Harbour under the foresail.

Imagining that the boat's crew and myself might be better received and treated on board the commander-in-chief's ship, than in a private vessel, I went alongside l'Alexandre, which ship bore his flag; and I surrendered myself and my crew as prisoners of war.

CHAPTER II.

A kind reception by the Enemy—Hospitality towards the Seamen—Our Shipmates all Prisoners—The last Boat arrives in safety—Consolations under misfortunes—Prisoners sent to the Hospital at Brest—Robbery by a French Seaman—Running the Gauntlet—Dilemma of wearing or giving up a Sword—The delicate point settled by the Gaoler—Distinction between a Sword and a Sword-Belt—Kindness of the French Nuns—Orders to march into the Interior—Unfortunate ignorance in ranking the Officers—Wounded Pride and Hard Fare, the Consequences—Bad Faith of the Minister of Marine—Mistake not rectified—The March begins for Verdun—Arrival at Landernau—Aristocratic Differences in Rates of Pay or Allowances amongst Republicans—Landiviziau—An Illustration of Equality—Morlaix—Belle-Isle-en-Terre—Guingamp—Dishonesty of Innkeepers—St. Brieux—A Plan of Escape—French Precautions—Lamballe, Rennes—Prisoners, and Vermin—Vitre—English Dogs at a French Inn—Laval—A Spectacle for the Mob—Alençon—Difficulties increased—Part of the Crew separated from their Officers—One part marched *viâ* Paris, the other through Rouen—Our Arrival at Rouen—A Gaol in a beautiful City—An hõnest Gaoler and his amiable Wife—A moderate Bill for Gaol Fare—*Bons Garçons* in a Prison—Our Arrival at Amiens—English Sympathy for suffering Countrymen.

I WAS not disappointed in my expectations, for I was received with the utmost civility. Every attention was paid to me, and I was provided

with a suit of dry clothes. They got me instantly (of which I never before stood more in need) a warm draught, and gave each of my men a glass of liquor, and ordered breakfast for them, with every thing else that was necessary to recruit exhausted nature, and to console them under their sufferings and misfortunes. The poor fellows were in a most deplorable state, shivering and shaking like aspen leaves: some of them were so worn out with fatigue, hunger, and the extreme severity of the weather, that they could scarcely articulate when spoken to. The French officers informed me also, that the whole of the boats, except mine and one other, from the extreme violence of the weather, had been obliged to make for Brest, and had arrived in the night; whilst they added, that they had been under the greatest apprehensions for our safety, as it was not supposed possible, from the size of the boats and the manner they were found,* that they could exist through the

* Provided or supplied.

severity of the night. Lieut. Barker, Mr. Nepean (a very worthy young officer, nephew of Sir Evan Nepean), a midshipman, and now a commander, and Mr. Carey, the boatswain (who afterwards died at Verdun), came on board, from the other French ships-of-war in which they were prisoners, to congratulate me on my extraordinary escape and safe arrival. We were, however, under the strongest and most painful apprehensions that Mr. Robert James Gordon, the midshipman who commanded the boat which had not yet arrived, had perished with his companions.

The next day, the 11th, at two P.M. we were all sent on shore to the hospital at Brest, which was the place assigned to us, as each individual was more or less unwell from the hardships he had undergone.

To mark the character of the French seamen, and of their naval service, I must here relate, that a small leathern trunk, or valise, in which I had saved a change of linen, &c., had

been taken out of one of our marines' hands, by a French sailor who spoke a little English, under the pretence of saving him the trouble of carrying it down the ship's side; whilst the scoundrel, instead of putting it into the boat, handed it in through one of the lower-deck ports. Our marine, who remained on the ship's gangway, had construed the transaction into an act of kindness, and concluded that the trunk had been safely deposited in the boat which was to carry us on shore; nor was the theft discovered until upon our landing, when the humble, though to me invaluable, property could not be found. I immediately communicated the fact to the officers who conducted us, and they instantly sent on board an order to search for the valise. In fact, they appeared excessively hurt that such an act of villany should have been committed by one of their crew. They assured me that the perpetrator should be severely punished, and that my little portmanteau should be safely returned. I despaired of this very

much, though I entertained little doubts of the first part of the promise being faithfully kept. In the meantime, those officers conducted us to the hospital, and insisted upon my wearing my sword all the way. The captain had refused to receive it on board, observing that I had been unfortunately wrecked, and not taken in fight, and, consequently, that I had no right to lose my sword; and he further remarked, that, in his opinion, we ought to be returned to our native country, and should not be considered as prisoners; but, he added, that the gaoler on shore would deprive me of my side-arms, which was afterwards the case.

On our arrival at the hospital, or rather prison (as we were closely watched and guarded), the gaoler took away my sword, and appeared very much enraged at my not allowing him to take my belt; this, I observed to him, could do no mischief. I now had the inexpressible happiness of shaking hands with all the officers, excepting Mr. Thomas (carpenter), who was un-

fortunately drowned in attempting to land in Bertheaume Bay, and Mr. Gordon,* midship-

* This truly heroic and promising young officer, Mr. James Robert Gordon, had escaped with another of my friends, Mr. Thomas Walbeoff Cecil, midshipman, a gallant and noble-minded young man (who, it will be remembered, was involved reluctantly in a duel many years afterwards, when a lieutenant, with Capt. Stackpoole, of H.M.S. Statira, in the West Indies, which, to the latter, unfortunately proved fatal), and Mr. —— Maxwell of the navy, also a promising youth, from a guard of *gens d'armerie*, on the route from Verdun to Bitche. But, previously to his quitting, he left confidentially, in my possession, a note to General Wirion, assuring me of his intention to get away *at all hazards* from the guard, and requesting me to wait a few days before I sealed the note, and put it in the post-office. To the best of my recollection it was *verbatim et literatim* as follows:—

"Monsieur le Général,

"L'amour de ma patrie et la gloire m'appellent, me demandent, et j'y cours avec le plus grand enthousiasme.

"J'ai l'honneur, Monsieur le Général,

"d'être votre très-humble Servitèur,

"R. J. GORDON,

"Aspirant de la Marine Royal Britannique."

His injunctions were most scrupulously executed by me. Mr. Gordon was subsequently second-lieutenant with my friend, now Capt. Sir Watkin Owen Pell, who was first-lieutenant in H.M.S. Mercury, under the command succes-

man, who, I was very much pleased to hear, was safe at Conquet,* where he had effected a landing. We expected him and his boat's crew round to Brest the following day.

On the 14th, we had the pleasure of seeing him and his crew safely arrived; they spoke very handsomely of the treatment they had

sively of Captains James Alexander Gordon, and the Hon. Henry Duncan, off Cadiz, and in the Mediterranean, and had served with Sir James Lucas Yeo in the Southampton frigate. He was the officer who had been sent by Sir James on board l'Améthyste, Haytian frigate, on Feb. 3d, 1812, previously to the dreadful carnage and capture on the same day of that ship by the Southampton. He was made commander on the 6th of June, 1814, and died September 27th, 1822, at Wilet Medinet, a day's journey from Sennaar, in Africa, whence he was, on a most perilous excursion, proceeding in an attempt to reach the source of Bahr Colittiad.

Before Capt. Gordon left the Mediterranean, he had made himself acquainted with the Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian languages, and had, I was informed, let his beard grow, wore the turban, and cheerfully submitted to an ordeal which was *indispensably necessary*, in order to enable him to travel with more security, and facilitate his enterprise in his assumed character of *an Israelite*.

* A seaport town in Passage du Four, about twelve miles west of Brest.

received at Conquet, and on the march. I now received part of the things that were in the valise, and the thief, I was informed, had run the gauntlet.

We were very well used during our stay here, and were attended by *religieuses*, or old nuns, which is a general custom in all the French hospitals. They were the most attentive nurses I ever beheld; constantly on the alert; visiting their patients; administering relief wherever it might be wanted; and always solacing the dejected.

On the 18th, we received information that we should commence our march towards our *dépôt* on the following morning; and, accordingly, on the 19th, we were ready at a moment's notice. At about eight o'clock we were all drawn up in the hospital-yard. Mr. Mahoney and myself (being the senior midshipmen) took our stations, as we were accustomed, next to the lieutenants; but, to our great surprise, on the names being called over, we were moved,

together with Mr. Carey, the boatswain, and Mr. Simpson, the gunner,* were placed next to the seamen. At the same time, each of us was offered a loaf of brown bread for the day's subsistence, which we declined. We demanded of the French officers an explanation of this extraordinary conduct, and they informed us that we were of a class (master's mates) different from any in their navy, and that they had, therefore, ranked us as adjutants, or *sous-officiers;*† and they insisted that they could not make any alteration. Lieut. Pridham now interfered in our behalf. It appeared he had been made acquainted, on the preceding night, that we should be thus ranked; but, not being versed in the regulations and titles of the French military service, he had supposed that an adjutant was equal to a rank between a midshipman and a lieutenant in our navy; and this, of course, he thought our proper

* He escaped, subsequently to me, with some other naval officers, from Bitsch.

† Considered as serjeants, corporals, &c.

place. After remonstrating for a long time against the impropriety of our being degraded to the ranks, and put among the people, the officer agreed to go to the Minister of Marine, to have the business, as he termed it, arranged. He shortly returned; the Minister of Marine was out, but we received an assurance from his head clerk, or secretary, that the mistake should be rectified the moment he returned, and that a courier would be despatched after us to the next stage, with another *feuille de route.* Thus far reconciled, we commenced our forced march, —and, as we were informed, for Verdun, in Lorraine, — although our crew appeared quite indignant at this insult, or disrespect, offered to their officers, and refused to move until we persuaded them to be obedient.

At about seven in the evening we arrived at our first stage, the small and miserable village of Landernau, about twenty miles N.E. of Brest. I anxiously expected every moment the arrival of the courier, so little was I then acquainted

with the nature of French promises, and with the French character. Here, as a great favour, we were permitted to mix with the officers. Our allowance was eleven sous, or $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ per diem; whilst the youngest midshipman, or volunteer, had fifty. The allowance to the men, I believe, was only five sous.

At day-light, on the 20th, we commenced our march, rather more dejected than the day before. In the evening we arrived at Landiviziau, a distance of five or six leagues from Landernau,* than which it was much smaller. Here we halted for the night, and the people were placed in stables, barns, &c. At day-break, on the 21st, we commenced our march towards Morlaix. At about two in the afternoon, at four or five miles' distance from the town, we were met by a captain of *gendarmerie* and two *gendarmes*,† who, we understood after-

* The French league was calculated at about two and a half miles English.

† The *gensdarmerie* of France consist of tried, experi-

wards, came out to escort us into that place. They had not long joined us, when I happened to discover one of our ship's boys lifting his hand to strike a young midshipman. I immediately ran up and chastised the youngster with a switch I fortunately had in my hand; but, mark my amazement! when I beheld this blustering captain of *gendarmerie* foaming at the mouth, and riding up towards me at full speed, with his sword drawn. He appeared to be in a very great rage, swore vehemently, and wielded his sword repeatedly over my head. As I did not understand a syllable of what he spoke, but was certain it must be abusive language, from the passion he put himself into, I, parrot-like, repeated his own expressions as well as I could; which irritated him to such a degree, that had not the officer of infantry who was escorting us, and our own officers, interfered, I do not know

enced soldiers; they have the internal regulation of the country, and form the best and most strict police in the universe.

to what length he might have carried the outrage. The officer of infantry expostulated with him on the impropriety of drawing his sword upon a naked prisoner, who could not even understand a word that he said. He declared, and persisted in it, that I spoke as good French as he did; that we were all prisoners alike; that we were now in a country where every man enjoyed liberty; and he would take care that, whilst we were with him, we should not tyrannise over one another; or, in other terms, that the officers should be on an equality with the men. I observed that some of the crew understood him, and that they explained his meaning to others, which seemed to please them extremely.

We had not, however, marched more than a mile, when a circumstance took place which gave us all a fine specimen of the liberty boasted of in this land of republicanism and equality. A poor man, who appeared to be at least seventy years of age, happened to be conducting a cart along

the road, and as he was approaching us, this lover of liberty called to him to turn his horses aside until we had passed; but the poor unfortunate old man not hearing, and continuing his way, this brute rode up to him, and beat and mauled him so unmercifully, that the seamen literally hissed him, and asked repeatedly, "If that were the liberty he had so much vaunted about a few minutes before?"

At about five in the afternoon we arrived at Morlaix.* Our people were lodged and treated for the night much as usual; but the officers, including myself and Mr. Mahoney, were allowed to go to a tavern. On inquiry, I found that this redoubtable captain of the *gensdarmerie* had been a weaver before the revolution, and by his perfidy had got advanced to the rank he held. I was informed that he visited our people in the

* Morlaix, a seaport town in the department of Finisterre, with a castle and tide harbour: the cartels and flags of truce between England and France generally arrive at this port. It is a place of great resort for the Americans.

night, and used his utmost exertions to make them turn traitors, and enter into the French service. Most glad am I to say, that he found all his efforts fruitless; and to the honour of our country be it related, that every proposal he made, every temptation he offered, was treated with disdain. Mr. Mahoney and myself had the pleasure in the evening of waiting upon three of our countrymen, who expected every hour to be permitted to return to their native land. These gentlemen were, a Colonel Macnamara,* a Mr. Scott, and a Mr. Fiott. They had been detained before the declaration of war, and were so fortunate as to obtain passports. I need not paint my emotions at the conflict between the desire and the impossibility of accompanying them; but all I could do was to avail myself of this unlooked-

* Col. Macnamara of Moriesk, and Mr. Scott of Cahercon, were of my native county of Clare. Mr. Fiott was an English gentleman, and uncle to my old messmate in the Amphion.

for opportunity of acquainting my friends with my misfortunes.

On the 22d, about eight, we again commenced our route, and, after a long march, arrived at a small village, Belle-Isle-en-Terre, where we remained for the night, disagreeably situated, the village being excessively poor and small, the people extorting double prices for every thing; however, this I have since found to be almost general throughout France.

On the 23d, at the usual hour, about eight, we recommenced our route towards Guingamp, where we arrived tolerably early. It is a spacious town, and appeared well peopled. We rested here during twenty-four hours, and were pretty well treated.

Guingamp is in the department du Côtes du Nord. The country, though late in the season, appeared beautiful. It is very fertile, and yet the peasantry seemed excessively poor and distressed.

On the 25th, at day-light, we recommenced

our march towards St. Brieux, the last town on the sea-coast that we had to touch at, and we arrived at about four o'clock. We were very closely guarded, which certainly was necessary, as the town was only a mile and a half from the sea, and it was the intention of a great number to slip their fetters; however, this proved impossible. We had another guard ordered, which we all regretted, as the officer who had conducted us from Brest to this place was a perfect gentleman, and preserved the utmost moderation towards the prisoners; who were not, by the by, at all times very well behaved. I here planned an escape, but could not accomplish it.

At daylight, on the 26th, we recommenced our route with our new guard. About ten, in passing close to the sea, we were halted; the guard loaded their pieces, examined their locks, and did every thing to intimidate us, and overawe any desire to resist them. They appeared to be alarmed lest we should attempt to escape,

though they were nearly as many as their prisoners in number. It would have been a desperate business, and no vessels were near in which 300 men could be embarked; but the bare possibility of our escape had nearly induced us to run the risk.

About five, we arrived at Lamballe, an ancient though small town, formerly in Brittany, and now in the Côtes du Nord, and once the capital of the ancient duchy of Penthièvre. It gave the title of princess to the unfortunate lady who was so inhumanly murdered at Paris for her inviolable attachment to the Queen of France. Lamballe is about twelve or thirteen English leagues to the N.W. of Rennes.

On the 27th, at eight, we were put upon our march for Rennes.* We were halted at

* This is an ancient, well-known city, in the department of Ille and Vilaine, of which it is the capital. The inhabitants are computed at 36,000; it is seated on the river Vilaine, which divides it into two parts. The streets are straight and broad; but they were very narrow before the fire in 1720, which is said to have consumed 850 houses.

Broons and Montauban, and arrived at our place of destination on the 29th.

The officers were allowed to go to a tavern, but we, who were still ranked as *adjutants*, were conducted to the common gaol; and, notwithstanding a number of representations and remonstrances conveyed to the general commandant of the town, we were kept in confinement until the 2d of March, having had at Rennes what was styled a day's *séjour*. Much rather would I have continued *en route*, as in this gaol we were associated with malefactors and criminals of every denomination, and, in despite of every effort, we found ourselves covered with vermin. We had at length another guard placed over us, joined our officers, and were very much pleased at being once more in the pure air.

We were now put upon our forced route to Vitre,* where we arrived at about eight

* Vitre is in the department of Ille and Vilaine.

o'clock on the evening of 2d March, having on this day walked the distance of nearly ten leagues, or about twenty-five English miles. At this town we met with but sorry treatment under our mortification and distresses. We had great difficulty to gain admittance into any inn, and still greater to procure refreshments of any sort. Upon remonstrating with the landlord about our miserable supper, and at the exorbitant price he charged for it, he retorted by calling us "English dogs," and told us that we ought to be glad to get any thing, and that the officers and public authorities were to blame for not placing us in a stable, or in some other place better appropriated to such brutes than an inn. If he had his will, he added, he would very soon treat us as such dogs deserved. In this strain he continued,—a strain much less to our annoyance than his bad supper and extravagant charges. This specimen of the national feeling of France, at this period of excitement, shews that the French thought well of English bull-

dogs, at least with respect to their digesting a long bill of fare. The river Vilaine runs through Vitre, and the town seems supplied abundantly with fish.

At daylight, on the 3d of March, we quitted our *polite* and *hospitable* host, and were marched towards Laval,* a tolerably large town on the Mayenne, renowned for its linen manufactories. We arrived about five in the evening, and were kept some time in the market-place, as a *spectacle* for the inhabitants, before we were shewn to our respective places for the night. Some of the people who could speak English came to inform us that our gracious sovereign, George the Third, had been dead several days, and that the result would be a general peace. We spurned at their intelligence, and, much to their annoyance, assured them that we did not give them the smallest credit.

* The inhabitants of Laval are computed at 25,000: the neighbouring quarries produce green marble, and black, veined with white.

From Laval we passed through Prez-en-Paille, a very small town, to Alençon,* where we arrived on the evening of the 5th, and were allowed to rest for twenty-four hours. Never was rest more needful to the desponding and weary. We had now marched many days through bad roads during an inclement season, and under all the feelings that deprive the traveller of the elasticity of spirits which supports bodily health, and enables him to conquer all difficulties, to undergo all fatigues, and to disregard all privations. Hitherto our whole ship's company, with their officers, had been kept together, but now even this consolation was to be destroyed. At Alençon the high-road branches off in two directions, the one leading to Paris through Versailles, the other striking off to the N.E. to Sees, Bernay, and Rouen. Unhappily the French rulers had ordered, that what they

* Alençon is a large town on the river Sarte, in the department de l'Oire, in Normandy. Paris is about ninety miles (British) N.E. of Alençon.

termed "the officers" should travel to their journey's end by the former route, whilst the crew should proceed to their destined place of imprisonment by the road through Rouen. Here the mistake of my rank by the minister of marine most seriously affected me. I was not to be included in the grade of officer. The lieutenants, midshipmen, and other officers, were therefore ordered to march on the road to Paris, whilst I and Mr. Mahoney, with the boatswain and gunner, as adjutants, or no officers, were ordered to proceed with half of the ship's company by the road through Rouen to Charlemont, or Givet, in the department of the Ardennes.

I confess this separation grieved me extremely. Parting with my messmates and friends in a foreign country, together with the insult and injustice of being placed in an inferior rank to my brother officers, could not fail of producing the depression so natural to any honourable mind. The feeling was reciprocal on the

part of my brother officers, and we separated with regret, they on the Paris route, and I and my companions on the more dreary road of the north.

Leaving Alençon, we passed through Sees and Bernay, and at length arrived at Rouen,* the capital of ancient Normandy, or of the modern department of the Lower Seine, at about two in the afternoon of the 12th. The hardships we underwent were inconceivable.

This large and splendid city, with its magnificent cathedral and manufactures, and with the beautiful scenery that surrounds it, might excite expectation and joy in the approaching traveller, but no such sensations can be roused in him who has been exhausted in a prison, worn out by fatigue, disgusted by ill usage, and

* Rouen is a large city, the capital of the department of the Lower Seine, situated on that river: its linens, particularly what are called the Siamoise, are much esteemed: the city, and its six suburbs included, are said to contain between 74 and 75,000 inhabitants. There are also manufactories of cloth, oil of vitriol, &c.

who has the prospect only of a long confinement.

Upon our arrival at Rouen we were all put into the common gaol, and it was of a character to give us not a very favourable idea of prison management or discipline in France. But I cannot pass over a circumstance that had happened before our arrival. Trivial as it is in one respect, it still illustrates the French character with respect to impositions in inns, even in the provincial towns, or small villages.

About nine in the morning of the day on which we entered Rouen, we were halted at a village on the banks of the Seine, in order to procure refreshment, and yet all we could get were eggs and bread; but if an egg is to be eaten with a spoon, the spoon must bear some proportion to the egg: here, however, we were supplied with pewter spoons of no ordinary dimensions. I observed to the French officer who had us in custody, that smaller spoons would be more convenient; and as he could not deny a

truth so palpable, he asked the old lady of the house if she had any. She replied in the affirmative, and, with alacrity, opened a large coffer, and taking thereout six silver tea-spoons, placed them on the table. With these spoons we ate our eggs, and, having finished our poor repast, we called for our bill; but what was the surprise of us poor and exhausted prisoners, when, in our wretchedness, we found that the old hag had charged us, what in a French village is not a trifle, a penny each for the use of her silver spoons! Even the French officer was quite amazed, and asked her what she could mean by such a demand. The old mercenary creature, who proved herself a compound of extortion and nationality, replied with *sang froid*,— "You see, sir, these Englishmen are so particular, that they cannot even eat like other people. My spoons have not been out of my chest for a number of years, and I am determined they shall pay for the trouble they have put me to." The officer in charge ought to have resisted the im-

position, but he made no such attempt; and, being defenceless, we paid our pennies, and respectfully wished the *honest old lady* a good morning.

I had another opportunity in Rouen of witnessing French shrewdness. I observed a number of brigs and small craft laid up in the river, in a dismantled and totally neglected state, and I could not help expressing, to one of the Frenchmen confined with us, my astonishment that those vessels should not have been equipped and sent to sea, upon some commercial venture. "And where, sir," replied the Frenchman, "would be the use of the attempt, when the English would have the vessels before they had completed one voyage?" This was unanswerable.

The prospect down the Seine was grand and beautiful. My view, however, was now changed to one of a very different nature. The transition from the delightful scenery, with nature's freshness and exhilaration, to the miseries of a com-

mon gaol, was rapid, and much increased, in this instance, by the gloomy countenance of the gaoler and his dear companion of a wife. They exhibited to us a perfect specimen of matrimonial concord, for both cordially agreed in accosting us in very antipathetic terms; and they were still more matrimonially harmonious in their assurances that, if we did not instantly pay for *two* nights' lodgings, we should be placed in cells not of the best description, and with culprits of the very worst. We could not entertain the slightest suspicion of the veracity of these worthy people, nor could we conceive a doubt that we were under the dominion of absolute and irresponsible power; and, notwithstanding we knew that what these kind people had said was a law, we took the liberty of asking why they demanded payment for *two nights;* and in matrimonial concord they replied, " That we were going to enjoy *one day's* rest in the gaol, and that the officer who had escorted us had assured them of the fact." There was no resisting such logic,

nor could we maintain the position that the French government ought to provide for its prisoners of war; and we were reduced to the necessity of paying for the comfort of a two-nights' lodging in gaol which we had the happiness of occupying for only one whole day.

This French officer, whose name, to the best of my recollection, was Galway, lived with us in all the small towns through which we passed, professing a great deal of friendship for us, whilst we were paying his expenses, and repeatedly declaring that he would prevent our being confined in the gaol of Rouen — would be himself responsible for us on account of our gentlemanly conduct, and by that means enable us to remain at an inn. But, alas! so shallow was this honourable gentleman's memory, that he even forgot to leave us our last day's allowance, or prisoner's money, of eleven sous, or fivepence halfpenny sterling; and did not recollect to give to his successor in power over us the certificate

he had received from our officers, stating our rank, and explaining the unfortunate mistake that had been made upon this subject at Brest. His keeping the point of honour, and of honesty and duty, would have been of material service to us; but I suppose that he did not even recollect, after he had disposed of us, that there was a gaol in the city; for we never saw him, or heard of him, after we had been placed under bars and bolts.

It was now that we came into terms with our host and his rib, and paid them a sum, equal to two shillings each, for the two nights' lodging. This pleased them so much, that they were convinced that we were officers and gentlemen; and they conducted us, with a great deal of respect and politeness, into an apartment in which there were two prisoners and three beds. Two of the beds were assigned to us. Our room-mates, we soon discovered, were debtors. The landlady very charitably observed, that she was certain that we must be faint and in want of refresh-

ment; and she kindly added, that she would send us some bread and a bottle of good wine for the present, and would procure us, *pauvres enfans!* a comfortable dinner in about an hour's time; and then she and her husband, after a thousand courtesies and bows, withdrew, not forgetting to turn the key in the door and to take it with them. We all agreed that this was a considerate, charitable, good woman; but much more did we extol her, when we saw the bottle of wine and loaf of bread. The man who brought it was a smart, active turnkey, who said, "Mistress is very busy in cooking dinner for the English captains: I have had the pleasure of waiting very frequently on British officers in this prison — they were very extravagant, and liked to live very well," &c. But this conversation did not by any means suit his present guests; so we made signs to the fellow to be off. He quitted us, taking the same precaution that his master had done. Our finances were ebbing

fast, and we began to fear the dinner which was preparing for us would not help to relieve them. I have already observed, that we had fivepence halfpenny *per diem* allowed us; but we were very frequently cheated even of that miserable pittance: and had we not each procured a little cash at Morlaix, on our private bills, we should certainly have perished of want. The table was now prepared with a cloth, a rare decency in a common gaol, and, in a short time, dinner appeared, with two bottles of wine. It consisted of a little fresh fish, and a small joint of boiled mutton; the dishes were cleared in a short time, without the smallest hope of a second course. We were anxious to ascertain what the generous good dame could or would demand for this *sumptuous* repast, and inquired of our active waiter, who went to his mistress, and forthwith she very kindly replied, "not to make ourselves uneasy, it would be time enough the next day." We accordingly waited until the next day; but

were determined to have nothing more until we knew what we were in debt.

Our fellow prisoners were particularly polite and attentive to us, and gave us a hint that we were greatly deceived in our opinion of the landlady; which we easily perceived the next morning, when we insisted upon hearing how much we had to pay for what she called dinner and wine. She very coolly informed us, fifteen shillings! we imagined it might have been about seven. However, it was in vain to attempt to explain, we paid the bill, and were resolved to be more circumspect.

At about eleven o'clock, some French naval officers came to inspect our people, and gave some of them pieces of money, with an intention to induce them to enter the French service. This I saw, as it was publicly done in the gaol-yard, and I happened to be looking out of the window at the time. I desired them to be particular in what they were about. One man, a Dane (Hendrick Wilson, a very fine fellow,

upwards of six feet high, who had been taken by us and had volunteered into our service), replied, " We will take what money they choose to give us, sir, and that shall be all they will gain by coming here."

On the morning of the 14th, about eight o'clock, a guard of cuirassiers rode into the yard. The gaoler was very expeditious in giving us notice that they came to conduct us on our march: so the bills were paid, and every thing settled to this man's and his good dame's satisfaction. We were then conducted down into the yard and joined by the people. The gaoler observed to the French officer and cuirassiers, that we were *des bons garçons.* This officer appeared to be a very affable, good kind of person, of the true old French school, before the character of the inhabitants had been demoralized by the revolution. He informed us that Mr. Galway, his predecessor, had left him no certificates; but he assured us that, with him, it should make no difference. All matters being arranged, we com-

menced our marched towards Amiens,* where we arrived on the 16th.

Our humane officer was as good as his word. In the small villages between Rouen and Amiens, he always took us to an inn and dined with us himself; but in Amiens he could not prevent our being put into the gaol. He, however, came frequently to see us, and remained with us for some time. Understanding that there was an Englishman, a Mr. S. Pratt, who kept an eating-house in this city, we sent to inform him that there were some of his countrymen, prisoners of war in the gaol, who wished to speak to him; but the only answer we received was, that he was *busy*. However, he sent Mrs. Pratt, who even shed tears at seeing the distressed condition of her poor, dear countrymen.

This benevolent Christian appeared over-

* Amiens is a very ancient town, in the department de la Somme, in Picardie: three branches of the river Somme enter this city: it has manufactories in linen and woollen cloth (established by Colbert), which employ not less than 30,000 people.

powered by the kindness so natural to her sex, and by a generosity, for the display of which she possessed a peculiar eloquence, she assured us that, "If she had it in her power, she would give all the seamen shoes and stockings, of which they stood so much in need, and a good dinner—that she would; but, at all events, she would go and instantly get a good dinner for us, poor dear creatures! for we must be famished." To this she added a great many similar tender expressions.

She took a *cordial leave* of each of us, and said that she would not come again until late in the evening, for fear of her visits being noticed; but she assured us that an excellent dinner should be sent as soon as possible, to her poor, dear countrymen. In about an hour we received a small roasted leg of mutton, without any vegetables, with two knives and forks, a little salt in a paper, and two bottles of very inferior wine. We expected to have the opportunity in the evening of expressing to the lady in person our sense of the excellence of the dinner; but

she never came near her "*dear, dear countrymen!*" She took care, however, to send her man with the bill, the charges of which exceeded those of the gaoler's wife at Rouen!

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Amiens — Arrival at Albert — Our French Officer's Delicacy and Liberality — Differences in the Comforts of the Country — Coal Fires — A Civic Feast at Bapaume — An alternation from Selfishness to English Sympathies — Effects of Champagne on French Aldermen — Sympathies between the French and English People — Hostilities between their Governments — A Change of National Principles and Sentiments between the two Countries in thirty years — A Separation from our kind Conductor — A new Escort — A forced March to Cambray — Pitiable State and severe Sufferings of the Seamen — Entrance into Cambray — A merciless Imprisonment — Starvation and Extortion — Landrecy, Avesnes, Hirson — A Billet upon the Inhabitants — Maubert Fontaine — Rocroy — A brutal Landlord — The Robbery and Abuse of Prisoners — Pitiful Conduct of French Officers — The Village of Fumez — Givet — Charlemont — A Description of the Fortifications — An Escape of Prisoners — A fruitless Pursuit — French Terrors of the English Prisoners — Brother Captives at Charlemont — Generosity of the French Commandant — La Tête de Cerf Inn — Private Lodgings — A Jacobin Landlady — Exhausted Funds — Modes of Living — The 4th of June — Honours done to King George the Third's Birthday — Roast Beef and Plum Pudding — Three Cheers to the King of England — French Terrors of Insurrection — The difference between taking off and only touching Hats in saluting Men in authority — A woful difference to the Imprisoned — An awkward Confinement — Good News — A joyful Departure in a cart for Verdun.

At length the destined hour arrived for our leaving this celebrated city, and for pursuing our

forced and cheerless marches to the place of our imprisonment. Accordingly, at about eight in the morning of the 17th of March, St. Patrick's day, a day of great festivity in my native isle and in many parts of the British empire, we were put *en route*, and we arrived at the little town of Albert,* in the department of the Somme, at five in the afternoon. Here we were halted for the night. The next morning our kind officer astonished us by a most elegant breakfast, consisting of every thing that the small town could supply. We had made it a point never to allow him to pay any of his personal or table expenses when he conducted us to an inn, and his breakfast was given, I suppose, much to his honour, as a complimentary requital.

Throughout Brittany and Normandy we had found an abundance of cider; and the fuel was totally or principally of wood. We had now beer substituted for cider; whilst turf and coal

* Here we saw turf and coals used for the first time since our departure from Brest.

fires, though seldom allowed to enjoy them, reminded us of the native land from which we were doomed to be so long and painfully separated.

From Albert we marched to Bapaume, a small fortified town in the department of Pas de Calais. The inhabitants boast that it has never been taken, even though the Duke of York was so close to it in 1793. The road was excessively dirty and bad. Our men were so exceedingly weak this day, the weather being very severe, and raining so incessantly, that our good officer made some of his cuirassiers take three or four of their prisoners behind on their horses. It was about four in the afternoon when we arrived. The officer took us to a tavern: we, dripping wet, were shewn into a spacious apartment, where a large table was laid out, and a number of genteel-looking citizens were sitting round a stove that was fixed in the centre of the room. They did not appear to take the smallest notice of us, nor to make place

even for the officer, who was wet to the skin: however, he took the liberty of requesting they would allow him to approach, which they did with seeming reluctance. We now endeavoured to dry ourselves, and get into the best plight we could; having ordered, at the same time, something for dinner, or rather supper, as it was about seven o'clock. We were given to understand that it was the election day for a new mayor, in consequence of which the aldermen and civic officers had ordered a dinner; which, being served up, left us in full possession of the stove, a circumstance that pleased us greatly.

Those gentlemen did not, in point of appetite, appear to deviate from their namesakes in a certain great metropolis, although I could not perceive that they had any turtle soup; champagne appeared to be the only wine they relished. Our supper was placed on a small table near the stove, and those gentlemen, as they became inspired with the generous juice of the grape, condescended to become more fa-

miliar with the English prisoners and the officer that had them in charge. They insisted upon our touching glasses, and even on our drinking champagne with them; and in the course of the evening these very people, who, on our arrival, had not vouchsafed to treat us with common civility, or even humanity, became so exceedingly hospitable, cordial, and pressing, as to prove an absolute annoyance. They even lavished in their cups a number of encomiums upon the "noble nation" to which we belonged. "What a great pity it is," they cried, "that Englishmen and Frenchmen are not unanimous! They would then carry every thing before them, and conquer the whole world." This was not the only instance we met with to prove that the enmity that was then raging between the two countries was less national than an affair of governments. The principles avowed by these citizens of Bapaume have now been embraced by France and England for more than twenty-three years, to the reciprocal benefit of each country, and

to the advantage of the whole world. What an immense change has this little space of twenty-three years produced in the principles, sentiments, and conduct of mankind!

We were now doomed to suffer a sad mortification and misfortune. The friendly officer who had conducted us from Rouen with so much humanity, and, I may say, delicacy, now informed us that he was superseded, and was no longer to be our guard or escort. He even added, that he had applied to be allowed to conduct us to our place of final imprisonment, and, to his mortification, had received a refusal. He appeared very much hurt at the disappointment, and left us for the night with much emotion, assuring us that we should not leave the town without bidding each other farewell.

At daylight, on the 19th of March, a sergeant awakened us, with the unwelcome news that he had brought a guard of dragoons to conduct us to Cambray. We were obliged to get up immediately, and to make the best arrangements

we could for our unpleasant journey. Our old officer and friend, as we considered him, made his appearance. He spoke of us with much warmth of good nature, and recommended us very strongly to the kind consideration of the sergeant. He then took an affectionate farewell of each individual, and literally shed tears at parting from us. Much did we regret his loss. He was tender-hearted and compassionate, and reflected honour on the nation that gave him birth, and even upon nature herself. Our people were so much attached to him, that he had not the least difficulty in inducing them cheerfully to obey his commands. They did implicitly whatever he desired. Is not this, under all these circumstances, a beautiful illustration of the superior facility of governing even the most dissatisfied of our fellow-creatures by kindness? Under this excellent man, with the indulgence he bestowed upon us, and with the confidence he reposed in our honour, not one of us would have taken an advantage of even the most

favourable opportunity of escape. Each would have felt it a disgrace to the character of our country, and a proof of an individual badness of heart and insensibility to honour. It is equally useful in the moral of governing mankind, to shew, in the following pages, what were the effects of the contrary system.

At half-past eight o'clock we had to commence our march to Cambray.* All the elements seemed to combine with every circumstance to make us feel our altered condition. It was a most severe morning, bitterly cold, and the north-east wind blowing fiercely in our teeth. It hailed and rained violently, and without intermission. Our poor crew were half-starved, miserably clad, and without shoes or stockings, and some of them even without shirts. They were in rags and tatters. With starved stomachs

* This was formerly a very renowned city: it has a fort and citadel, and was once strongly fortified, but at present the walls are decaying, and in ruins. It is seated on the Scheldt, famous for the manufacturing of Cambrics, which took their name from this city.

and broken spirits, they were forced upon this long march to the cheerless bourn of a gaol. A little while before, they had been proudly walking the deck of an English frigate, feeling, in a well-founded elation of heart, the heroic confidence of conquering a great disparity of force of that nation to which they were now miserable, though still high-minded, captives. The contrast of condition was deplorable, yet our spirits were much the same. In these circumstances, and under the new escort of dragoons, we pursued our march to Cambray, where we arrived about four in the afternoon, in a truly pitiable state. We were a mass of dirt and filth, exhausted, and without that alone which can make nature endure extreme difficulties — the prospect of amelioration or relief. The consciousness of the merits of the past we had, but of prospects of the future we were miserably destitute.

In this state we were marched through Cambray, the gaze of the people, who rejoiced to see

a procession of English captives. They felt an extraordinary exultation at witnessing prisoners of a country that had been so proud and so triumphant. After passing this ordeal we were lodged in the citadel.

If, in the first part of the captivity, I and my companions had been degraded and subjected to hardships as private seamen, here I had my retribution, for we were all four now called captains; and, in virtue or honour of our rank, we were, *pro tempore*, allowed accommodation in the canteen. This was, in fact, an increase of misery, for our poor seamen were put into the dungeons, or *souterrains*. We would rather have shared their fate. Does it not shew a miserable system in France at that period, when, in a city like Cambray, it could be deemed necessary so to confine a small body of prisoners, the captives of accident, the victims of misfortune, and from whom no apprehensions of escape or resistance could for a moment be entertained? With all the boast of the French, it is evident

that their whole system was then extremely bad; and yet it was at a period when the concentered energies of the nation were directed to this part of the French territory.

This point is further illustrated: for even in this city of Cambray, so wretched was the machinery of French government, that it was only by our strenuous exertions that we could procure for our poor seamen some fresh straw, for which we paid an exorbitant price, for their miserable repose. In this straw they enjoyed what warmth they could, making it into ropes, and twisting it round their exhausted limbs and bodies, after refreshing themselves with a sort of soup which we provided for them, and paid for also dearly. This was what the French called *soupe grasse*, and was made in the following manner:— They fill a large pot, or *marmite*, with water. When it begins to boil, they throw one or two handfuls of salt into it, according to the quantity of water, chop up some cabbage or herbs, which they also put in,

and, last of all, a ball of hog's-lard, kitchen-stuff, dripping, or any other grease they may have. They then allow it to boil until the materials are well done. It is afterwards served up in soup-plates or dishes, into which has been previously put bread, cut into very thin slices. The charge is twopence, and sometimes more, for each plateful. I saw our landlady at Sees, a village near Rouen, after she had cooked us some beef-steaks, put all the gravy into the pan, fill it up with water, and after she had kept the pan boiling for some minutes, pour the whole contents into a large pot of water which she had boiling on the fire, previously prepared with salt and herbs: this she served out as soup to our poor seamen, at a most exorbitant price.

We remained at Cambray until the 21st, when a severe frost, with snow, set in; and we had to march, with the wind and snow and hail at intervals right in our faces, to Landrecy,* at

* This town is in the north department, and late province of Hainault: the fortifications are very much neglected. It

a distance of nearly six British leagues. Our people were there put into the gaol, and we were allowed the *honour* of stopping at the *Palais National* tavern. They were very fair here in their demands. At daylight, on the 22d, we commenced our route to Avesnes, in the Pays-Bas, where we arrived at about four. They put us all indiscriminately into the town-gaol. About five, the town-major came to speak with us, and obtained us permission to go to a certain inn, which he pointed out, and where we were egregiously imposed on. The men were left in the gaol. The 23d, we had another guard of dragoons, under the command of a serjeant, to escort us to our *dépôt*. At about three, we arrived at a poor little village, called Hirson; where, having no gaol, they billeted both ourselves and the seamen upon the inhabitants. I and my companions were quartered at a collar-maker's house. The poor people were extremely

was taken by the allies, after a severe bombardment, in 1794, but was retaken in three months afterwards.

civil, and provided us with tolerably good beds. We paid them for every necessary with which they supplied us.

The next morning (the 24th) we had to take our leave of the collar-maker and his family, and were put upon our march to the village of Maubert Fontaine, which was by far more poor and miserable than even Hirson. Here we were again billeted upon the inhabitants; and quarters in private houses were so preferable to confinement in a gaol, that the difference easily reconciled us to the smallness of the town. The people with whom we were placed were very great impostors, and extorted double prices for every thing with which they supplied us.

On the next morning (the 25th), however, we parted from these unfeeling knaves, and were put upon our march to Rocroy, in the Ardennes.* The

* This town is in the department of Ardennes: it is tolerably well fortified, and is celebrated for the victory gained by the Prince of Condé (then Duke of Enghein) over the Spaniards, in 1643.

distance was short, and we arrived early; and our people were immediately put into the common gaol. My companions and I exerted all the interest and rhetoric that we could muster to be allowed, as officers, to go to an inn; and the request at last was conceded. Here we rested twenty-four hours, and had the misfortune to find our landlord a most consummate scoundrel, who took advantage of every opportunity, or rather made opportunities both to defraud and insult us. The next morning, at our departure, he presented us with an account of a sum total, or gross amount of his demand, without condescending to specify a single item in detail. We expostulated with him upon the nature of his bill and upon its enormous amount, and wished to know how he could possibly make it so great; for, in fact, we had been particularly economical, as our funds were getting very low. The impostor flatly refused any explanation whatever, but peremptorily insisted upon immediate payment, bestowing upon us insulting and provoking epithets, in

numbers and of a character that brought conviction to our minds that he had no ordinary talents for this species of assault and battery. We were obliged to submit to all his furious and disgusting abuse; and, what in our situation was still worse, we were compelled to pay the bill, or rather the no bill, for it was an extortion without a bill. To the great disgrace of the French military character, I must repeat, that in no instance did the officer in charge of us protect us from these gross impositions, which were rendered more shameful and cruel from our helpless condition.

The demand being satisfied, and the torrent of abuse digested with as little bile as possible, we took our leave of Rocroy; and, turning our backs upon our host, the dragoons put us upon our march on the road to the little village of Fumez, on the Meuse, so famous for its slate quarries, where we arrived early in the day, and were all of us billeted upon the inhabitants, whom we found extremely civil and obliging.

We were now but one stage from Givet, with

its citadel of Charlemont, and at eight o'clock the next morning, the 28th of March, we commenced our last day's journey.

At three in the afternoon we entered Givet, or Charlemont, our place of destination, and thus did we terminate our distressing march from Brest, a distance, by the *détour* we had gone, of nearly 700 miles, performed in thirty-nine days, including resting-days, through inclement weather, bad roads, and under every circumstance calculated to destroy life, or to embitter it whilst it lasted.

Givet is a fortified town in the department of Ardennes, and bishoprick of Liege, divided by the Meuse. That portion on the south side of the river is called Little Givet: this town is commanded by a very strong fort and citadel (Charlemont), built upon an immense rock: the fortifications were constructed by Vauban. We never were allowed to enter the citadel, consequently were ignorant of the force or number of guns mounted on it. It was attacked by the

allies in 1794, from an eminence on the south side of the river, but without effect. But in 1696 it was bombarded by the celebrated Coehorn, when immense magazines of stores, forage, ammunition, &c., provided by the French for the ensuing campaign, were destroyed. A communication between Great and Little Givet is kept up by means of a ponton bridge: the centre boats are placed so as to be hauled out occasionally to admit vessels to pass up and down, which frequently happens. There are passage-boats that sail regularly between this town and Namur, which is ten or twelve leagues north-east of it. Little Givet is chiefly inhabited by tanners, who carry on an extensive trade in this part of the country; but they are greatly at a loss in the currying part of their business. These people appeared very much disposed to be friendly with us; but we were kept so very close and strict, that it was impossible to form any acquaintance. Every necessary of life is cheap in this town: their beer is tolerably good. Wine is rather

dear, as there are very few vineyards in the neighbourhood. We discovered a vast difference in the nature of the soil here and that of the countries of the west, viz. Brittany, Normandy, and Picardy: this appearing much more barren and uncultivated. I have often observed with surprise how singularly neglectful they were of the fortifications of the town, and how particularly attentive with respect to those of Charlemont, the citadel. Our prisoners, at the commencement, were confined in this place; but when they became numerous, they were moved down to the horse-barracks, from a dread, I suppose, of their revolting some day, and taking possession of citadel, town, and all. Had they once possession of one, the other would be entirely at their mercy and disposal. During our stay at this *dépôt*, four of the seamen escaped from their prison, two of whom belonged to our late frigate. On their being missed the following morning, parties of *gens d'armes* on horseback were despatched by the commandant

to search for them in all directions, with strict orders to mutilate, and, in fact, *not to bring them back alive;* "that it might prove an example (using his own expression) to the rest of the prisoners." However, fortunately for those poor fellows, they escaped their pursuers, at least for that time. They were afterwards taken at Dunkirk, as they were about to embark in an open boat. The commandant was also frequently in the habit of riding into the prison-yard, and taking his pistols out of the holsters, examining the priming in order to terrify us. This he did generally in the evening, and the prisoners could not refrain from laughing at such foolish conduct.

Upon our arrival here, we found, as prisoners of war, the crews of La Minerve and the Shannon, frigates that had been commanded by Captains Jahleel Brenton (now Rear-Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton, Bart., K.C.B., Lieut.-Governor of Greenwich Hospital), and Gower, who, with their officers, were at Verdun. There were also in confinement a number of English seamen that had

been captured in merchant vessels. We were immediately visited by a Mr. Bradshaw, one of Captain Brenton's clerks, sent here by him, who was permitted to reside in the town, in order that he might act as that officer's commissary. Mr. Bradshaw introduced me and my companions to Captain Petervin, of the *gendarmerie*, who was commandant of the prisoners of war. A Jersey man, named Goree, was employed as interpreter, and he explained to Captain Petervin our rank in the English service; but the captain, though unwilling to put us under close imprisonment, seemed at a loss what to do with us, as we had been sent to him as private seamen. He hesitated, and for a long time remained undecided, but at last he consented that we might go to *La Tête de Cerf* tavern that night. To *La Téte de Cerf* we joyfully proceeded with Mr. Bradshaw, after giving Monsieur le Commandant a thousand thanks for his condescension. We found that we had been sent to a very decent tavern, the first in

the town, which convinced us that the captain of the *gendarmerie* entertained a favourable opinion of the English *adjutants*. We justified his acuteness by ordering a good dinner. Mr. Bradshaw dined with us, and exhilarated our drooping spirits by assurances that the commandant would be induced to permit us to lodge in the town. We ordered an additional bottle of wine on the strength of this good news, and passed the evening as cheerfully as possible under the recollection of past sufferings, and with the dismal prospect of a long imprisonment, apart from the glorious services which our profession was then rendering to our country.

The next day the commandant received us with the politeness for which his countrymen had at one time been so proverbial. We explained through our interpreter the excessive injustice and cruelty of being sent to the seamen's *dépôt*, and treated differently from our brother-officers. He sympathised with us in all we said, assured us that he would send off a despatch to

General Wirion at Verdun (who was commander-in-chief over the British prisoners), and state the case to him; at the same time, he advised us to write to our commanding officer, and promised to have our letter forwarded: he desired us to remain quietly at our tavern, and assured us that he would do every thing in his power to alleviate our distresses. We gave him our best thanks, took our leave, and returned *à la Tête de Cerf.*

Upon an overhauling of our finances, we had the mortification to find that we could not remain many days at a tavern, not having a farthing allowed us for our subsistence; the fivepence halfpenny *per diem* ending at the moment we arrived at the *dépôt.* Mr. Bradshaw could not render us any pecuniary assistance, without Captain Brenton's permission, consequently our situation was becoming every moment worse and worse. As lodgings, we were informed, were excessively cheap in the town, we concluded that we had better apply to the commandant for leave to hire a couple of rooms,

with cooking utensils, &c., than to continue any longer as we were. However, we dreaded that he might order us into the barracks with the people, if we began so early to demand favours. We, therefore, agreed to be extremely economical, and to wait a few days longer. Those days being expired, we made the intended application, and with success. He approved of our plan, and gave us a written permission to walk about the town. This he did entirely upon his own responsibility, and assured us that he relied upon our honour not to go without the limits of the town; adding, that if we abused this indulgence, we would be severely punished. We declared our intentions were not to cause him the smallest trouble or uneasiness, and we were particular in the observance of our promise.

The same day we hired two rooms at Madame de Garde's, the widow of a *ci-devant* general. She provided us with two beds for us four, cooking utensils, and every thing necessary for housekeeping, and at a very moderate price.

We acquainted Mons. le Commandant of our success, who congratulated us, but, at the same time, appeared sorry that we lodged with this old lady, observing that she was *une jacobine*, and of the *old school*. All persons at this time, who were known to be attached to the English, were reprobated as jacobins; and I need not say that we liked the old dame the better for this information, though we took care to disguise our feelings, and to conceal the fact. Our *ménage* commenced the following morning. We took the daily cooking and different duties by rotation, but were soon able to get rid of these unpleasant services, for we procured permission for an infirm old man, named Allen, who had been our captain's steward, to live with us as our cook and servant. Our dishes were certainly not very varied or exquisite: soup and *bouilli*, with vegetables, constituted our daily fare; and even this, we apprehended, would soon be beyond our rapidly decreasing finances.

All April and May had dismally passed, and

no answers to our letters had been received from Verdun. Our rent was in arrear, and our purses at the point of exhaustion. We solicited Mr. Bradshaw to grant us the sailor's allowance of a pound of meat each *per diem;* but even this he could not do without the authority of Captain Brenton. This, however, was received from Verdun by return of post; and the pound of meat proved of very material service to the poor adjutants, and for which they were most thankful to their humane chief, Captain Brenton.

We applied repeatedly to be removed to the officers' *dépôt* at Verdun, but it was not until the latter end of May that we received even an answer to our letters. In fact, our applications had been intercepted, or at least they had never been received. Lieutenant Pridham now gave us hopes of being shortly attended to; for he assured us that both Captain Brenton and himself were using every exertion to have us removed, and our rank acknowledged.

At length arrived the glorious 4th of June,

the birthday of our sovereign, George the Third; and for this one day at least were our sufferings forgotten, and our sorrows cast to the wind. We were resolved, if possible, to make some demonstration in honour of the day; and at last, low as were our pecuniary circumstances, we did contrive to give a birthday dinner to the commandant and to the paymaster of the *dépôt*. From this latter officer, whose name was Payne, we had received many civilities.

The day altogether passed off very agreeably until about sunset, when the time arrived for locking the seamen up in the different wards of the gaol. They now gave three tremendous cheers, which flowed from the heart, in commemoration of the day that gave birth to their gracious sovereign; and, as the last cheer stunned and terrified the astounded Frenchmen, they hauled in the colours of different nations that they had kept all day streaming out of each window, taking care to have the French tricoloured flag under all; which was never noticed

by either commandant or guards. The enthusiastic cheers of nearly a thousand men made a most powerful noise: it was music to our ears as we sat at table, our lodgings being contiguous. The commandant, who was greatly alarmed, imagined that the seamen had revolted, and had actually got out of prison: so great was this officer's hurry, that he made but one step from the top of the stairs to the bottom. We had some little trouble in getting him on his legs again, and were greatly rejoiced in finding that he had received no injury from this step, or rather fall —assuring him there was no foundation whatever for his fears. However, he would be convinced in person: he, therefore, went to the prison, and was rejoiced to find every thing perfectly tranquil.

Being returned, he observed that the English were *des braves gens*, and he would drink another glass of wine in commemoration of King George's birthday. The national dish, roast beef with plum pudding, which we had made ourselves,

was not forgotten upon this occasion. *Monsieur* liked the well-done, or outside part of the former, extremely; but the latter neither of our guests would touch for a long time. At last, by dint of persuasion, they condescended to taste it; and so sudden was the transition made upon them by that taste, that we had some pains to secure ourselves a part, though it was a pretty sizeable pudding. They exclaimed, as they gulped it down, "*Sacré bleu, comme il est bon!*"—"*Ma foi, oui!*" repeated each alternately. We felt highly pleased at the sight, and laughed heartily.

At a late hour, or rather, in regard to the morning, an early one, *Messieurs* took their leave, evidently in great spirits, and we retired to rest.

Since our arrival at this *dépôt*, several of the stoutest, and, apparently, most healthy of our men, had died of a fever, supposed to have been caught in some of the gaols on the road. Our poor servant, Allen, was seized with it, and ex-

pired in a few days. With respect to comforts, our prisoners were badly off; but the French medical officers at Givet were certainly humane and attentive.

In the latter part of June, to our surprise and chagrin, the commandant appeared much altered in his manner towards us. We were unable to imagine what could be the cause of so sudden and total a change. Mr. Bradshaw, however, informed us that he had observed to him, "that the English officers (as he was kind enough to style us) were excessively proud."

"I never meet them," said he, "but I take my hat off, whilst they only lift theirs to me."

Admitting this to have been the case, we had a better opinion of him than to suppose that any thing so trivial could cause an alteration so great in his behaviour towards gentlemen who were prisoners of war, and in his power. Thus, however, certain it is, that with all mankind, a slight or insult, real or imaginary, intended or casual, produces more rancour

than an injury. By the accidental hurry or carelessness of using a wafer instead of sealing-wax to a letter, the prime minister of England, at a crisis of the country, for a time lost the support of one of the wealthiest and most influential dukes of the political world.

But our commandant's anger was not soon appeased. He one night sent a guard of *gens d'armes* to take us from our lodgings to the guardhouse, for being in the streets after nine o'clock, when it was scarcely dark at that time of the year, and although we had no regular time prescribed by him to be in-doors. In the guardhouse we remained, on a cold pavement, all night, at a loss to know of what we had been guilty. Our guards assured us that it was merely *the caprice of the commandant.* At noon Mr. Bradshaw visited us, but without affording any hopes of release. The commandant had informed him that we were confined for not answering a sentinel on his post, who had hailed or challenged us. This we positively

denied, as we had not passed a single sentinel that night. Monsieur Brasseur, the second in command, then came to visit us, and expressed great sorrow at seeing us thus confined without any cause. He waited on the commandant, became responsible for our conduct, and had us removed to our lodgings, where we were commanded to confine ourselves until "further orders."

Our excellent landlady received us with the greatest joy imaginable, bathed us with her tears, and had refreshments ready for us, though she had sent us a very good breakfast to the guardhouse, and was herself very poor. In three days we were once more liberated; but, henceforth, we were always confined whenever a religious procession or public ceremony took place, and which at this particular time was very frequent. Our chief amusement was a game at billiards, and a walk round the ramparts, or rather ruins. We frequently met with military officers at the billiard-table, who always

behaved with the strictest politeness, and made us an offer of the table the moment we entered the room; which, of course, we declined until they had finished.

I purchased a grammar and dictionary, with the intention of learning French, and also begged of the lady at the library to choose me an easy French book, that I might begin translating, which she had the kindness to do; but, to my surprise, her choice was from a collection not to be mentioned, and which obliged me to return it. She then gave me a novel, and laughed immoderately at my disapproving her taste or judgment.

From the commandant's conduct of late, we were constantly under apprehensions of being closely confined with the sailors: he appeared more inveterate against me than any of the rest. However, about the 10th or 12th of July, we received a letter from our commanding officer at Verdun, stating that General Wirion had, at last, sent an order for Mr. Mahoney and myself

to be conducted to the Verdun *dépôt*, but not a word did it contain about either the boatswain or gunner.* The commandant received the order by the same post. Mr. Bradshaw had also a letter from Captain Brenton, who had kindly and considerately directed him to supply us with cash to enable us to proceed. All this intelligence arriving at the same time, nearly overwhelmed us with joy; but the two other poor fellows that were to remain, were not only disconsolate at the inequality of their fate, but

* These poor fellows we had the inexpressible sorrow of seeing pass through Verdun in less than three months after we quitted them, together with two of our seamen that escaped from Givet prison. They were arrested close to the water side, near Dunkirk, as already mentioned, and were on their way to Bitche to be punished. Goree, the Jerseyman, who acted as interpreter, through some pique, informed the commandant that the boatswain and gunner had an idea of making their escape. He gave him credit for this information, and despatched these poor fellows to a *dépôt* of punishment; where they remained for two years and a-half, which caused the death of the boatswain, Mr. Carey, as noticed in a preceding page. This very scoundrel, the informer, a few days after their departure, made his escape, and arrived safe at Jersey.

full of apprehensions that as soon as we had left them, the offended commandant would become both more mean and cruel in his severity.

At last, on the 16th of July, we were to leave Givet for Verdun. Mr. Mahoney had a bad foot, and a cart was therefore provided, in which I had the privilege of riding. Every thing was at length settled for our departure, and we had previously been permitted to see our ship's company, — a pleasure of which we had been deprived for some weeks. This scene was sadly interesting, and we left the brave fellows with reciprocal good wishes. We took an affectionate farewell of our two shipmates and of our good landlady, and began our route to Verdun, under the escort of two *gens d'armes*.

CHAPTER IV.

Our Arrival at Fumez — Liberty of Action — Rocroy, Mezières — A French Landlady — Sedan, Stenay, Sivry — Our Arrival at Verdun — A Joyful Reception — General Wirion — His Indulgence towards the Prisoners — The Meetings of old Shipmates and Friends — The studying of French, Italian, and Fencing — Mental Employment the best Antidote against *Ennui* and Dissipation — The cruel Transportation of the Acasta's Boat's Crew from Brest to Verdun — Restiveness at Confinement — Anxiety to be again in the Active Service of Old England — Meditations upon an Escape — Contrivances to avoid a Breach of Parole or any Breach of Honour, private or national — Providing Necessaries for the Elopement and Journey — Three Comrades, or *Compagnons de Voyage* — Scaling Ramparts — A Descent of Seventy-two Feet — The Open Country — The March commences — The course by Compass and Map, *north-west*, for Estaples, on the Coast — Flying by Night, and hiding in Woods by Day — Heavy Rains, Dismal Roads, and Swampy Beds, with Bad Fare and Good Hearts — Leaping a Moat — A Dislocated Knee — Great Sufferings — Terrors of not being able to Proceed — Fidelity and Magnanimity of Friendship — The March resumed, and pursued lamely — A Wrong Course, and Time lost — The Town of Neuville — Long Privation of Water — Extreme Sufferings from Thirst — A Poisonous Ditch — Water at length procured, Anguish allayed, and the Escape proceeded upon with renewed Spirits.

ON the 16th of July, 1804, we arrived early at Fumez,* a village of which I have already made

* An old woman doing the duty of crier attracted my notice. At a corner of one of the streets she began her

mention. We were allowed to do as we pleased on our arrival, and to go to any inn we liked. Our guard informed us that the commandant of Givet had inserted in our *feuille de route* that we should be considered as officers of rank, on parole, and be treated accordingly. This was a circumstance that greatly surpassed our expectations. In the course of the day we were joined by some British sailors, who also had a cart, some of them being ill. The next morning we were all marched together towards Rocroy; only one cart was allowed, and my brother-officer was obliged to mount with the other sick. We took care not to go to the house at Rocroy where we had been recently so ill used, and found another much more preferable.

From Rocroy we were marched to Mezières,* and put up at a tavern, being now officers

preamble. She had a small bar of iron in one hand and a large key in the other, as a substitute for a bell.

* The head town of the department of Ardennes, seated

of rank, which our landlady appeared to have been informed of. This old lady was, if possible, more extortionate than any we had yet met with. We found that, unless we previously made an agreement, particularly specifying what we wished, and regulating the price of every article, we should be liable to the greatest imposition; and this, indeed, is pretty generally the case throughout France. From Mezières we passed through Sedan,* Stenay,† and a small village, Sivry; and on the 23d arrived at Verdun,‡ the long wished-for place of our ultimate destination.

on the Meuse; the town of Charleville is within two miles of it. Mezières has a strong citadel and good fortifications.

* A strongly fortified town, twelve miles from Mezières; it has a strong castle, in which the famous Marshal Turenne was born: it is renowned for its cloth manufactories.

† Stenay, an open town on the Meuse, about ten leagues N. by W. of Verdun.

‡ This town, I have no doubt, has been frequently described by several persons during this war, having been the *dépôt* for upwards of 800 British prisoners nearly six years; however, I shall observe, that it is an ancient fortified town, with a citadel, seated on the Meuse. It is the second principal town in this department; the chief is Bar le Duc. It

We were received by Captain Brenton, our officers, and countrymen, in the most joyful and cordial manner. For two nights, until we could procure lodgings, we were billeted at the inn *Les Trois Maures*, at which the Emperor Napoleon put up on his return after his splendid campaign in Germany, and the Treaty of Tilsit. Two or three days after our arrival, Mr. Pridham introduced us to General Wirion, who gave us permission to walk in the suburbs, provided our commanding officer became responsible for our conduct, *corps pour corps;* which Lieutenant Pridham had done. In the course of a few days I procured lodgings, recently vacated by a *détenue*, Sir James de Bathe, with Mr. Ashworth, a midshipman, who had been one of my mess-

is divided into two parts by the Meuse; one is called *La Ville Haute*, the other, *La Ville Basse*. Its fortifications were constructed by the Chevalier de Ville, and Marshal de Vauban; the latter was a native of this place. It was taken by the Prussians in 1792, but retaken soon after. Every necessary of life is remarkably cheap here: the country abounds with vineyards, owing to which wines are excessively cheap.

mates in our late ship, the Hussar. He afterwards died at Minorca in consequence of wounds he had received off Taragona, when a lieutenant of H.M.S. Centaur, while in the act of snatching from destruction the unfortunate Spaniards who were being sabred by the French cavalry, when rushing into the sea to our boats for protection.

This gallant and esteemed friend is interred near the celebrated fort St. Philippe, leading into the harbour of Mahon, where a tablet is erected to his memory by his messmates, as a testimony of their regard for his great merits and intrinsic worth as an officer and a gentleman.

I met a number of old acquaintances here, particularly a midshipman, Mr. Robert Blakeney, brother of Major-General Sir Edward Blakeney, who had been, as before alluded to, an old friend and messmate with me on board the Amphion; also Mr. Charles Hare, son of the late Captain Hare, R.N. These, and similar

circumstances, soothed our feelings, and rendered imprisonment as little afflicting as any thing in its nature so unwelcome could be made.

As soon as I found myself a little settled, in conjunction with my much-esteemed friend Ashworth, I employed a French master, and pursued my studies with the utmost assiduity. I never left the town, except occasionally on race-days,* or days of other public amusements.

* Races, and all species of amusements that can deprive an Englishman of his property, or divert his attention for a moment, were allowed by the general who commanded the prisoners. I have been informed that there were fixed prices for all these indulgences. The hazard table, and *rouge et noir*, have been the destruction of many of our countrymen. Every kind of debauchery and libertinism, I am sorry to add, was permitted and practised in this town. Latterly, from the principal people of fashion and men of property being dispersed, horse-racing ceased, and gambling also, in a great degree.

When war was declared between the Austrians and French, and the Boulogne camp was broken up, one division of the army was marched through this town. Their conduct, though frequently several thousands together, was exemplary: they attracted our notice greatly. I never perceived that they got intoxicated, or were insolent to the prisoners of war. In the Prussian war, also, we saw a number of troops

We likewise engaged a fencing-master, and, as soon as we were tolerably advanced in the French language, we procured an Italian master, and applied ourselves to study under him with the greatest diligence. These literary pursuits were of incalculable advantage to us; for, whilst they strengthened the mind, and spread over it

pass through. They were chiefly conducted in carriages of every description (post haste). They sometimes stopped a few minutes to refresh; and I heard some of them observe, that it was the *sacré* English guineas that bred discord on the Continent. I got into conversation with one who had been lately in Brest, and asked him if they had a strong fleet lying there: he replied, with an oath, taking me for one of his countrymen, " Only two or three rotten ships, that were not seaworthy; the English took all the rest as fast as they quitted the harbour; and, if the government was of his opinion (he added), they would not put the country to the expense of building any more." I plainly discovered that this soldier took me for one of the citizens, for he was extremely communicative. Buonaparte passed through twice; the last time was after the treaty of Tilsit. The inhabitants had triumphal arches, &c. erected for him. Prince Murat was with him in his carriage. His guard was his favourite Mameluke, and the *gens d'armes* and young men of the town that met him to escort him through. I observed him bow with seeming complaisance to the prisoners of war, who took their hats off as he passed. The ever-memorable action of

the charms inseparable from the acquisition of useful knowledge, they fortified us against the allurements of dissipation, lightened the weight of our captivity, and saved us from that moral disease *ennui*, with all its train of passions and disordered appetites which people are prone to inflict upon themselves, by an indulgence in

Trafalgar was reported to us to have been gained by the French; they boasted of killing the only hero England had, and of taking the *Prince de York*, a British three-decked ship, and another, whose name I now forget; which we were certain to be a falsehood, as those were names that we had not in our navy. The truth very soon transpired, although they endeavoured as much as possible to stop all communication between both countries. We had private letters, and a Frenchman shewed me the copy of a letter from a captain in the French army, who had served as a marine officer on board of one of their ships on that day, and was dreadfully wounded in several places. It reflected the greatest honour upon him: it was addressed to his brother, at Nancy, near Verdun. His account was impartial, and corresponded with the English report. He stated the length of time they were employed in forming the line-of-battle, the superiority that, it appeared to him (though a landman), the enemy's fleet had over theirs; to use his own words, "They came down upon us in two columns, without attending to any of our arrangements, and threw us into the utmost confusion: it was in vain to resist—Nelson commanded!!!"

habits of idleness. We were stimulated in our zeal for our studies by reflecting that we were acquiring that which would make us more useful to our country in our profession. However, what we witnessed, and what we experienced, convinced us of the inestimable benefits of mental pursuits in mitigating the sufferings of captivity, as well as of the extent to which those sufferings are aggravated by a want of intellectual employment.

In a few months after my arrival, a Mr. M'Grath, a relation of mine, was escorted to this *dépôt*, with Mr. Wills, master's-mate, and a boat's crew of the frigate Acasta. Mr. M'Grath was surgeon's-assistant. They had been made prisoners on the island of Beniget, near Brest. Mr. Wills had been ordered early in the morning to land on that island, and load his boat with sand for scouring the decks; and Mr. M'Grath had received permission to accompany him, merely for the purpose of taking a walk, and amusing himself while the men

were loading the boat; but they had no sooner landed than they were surrounded by a number of French troops that were lying in ambush for them, and had been disembarked the night before for the express purpose of surprising some of the English boats which were daily in the habit of coming on shore. Our poor fellows were immediately secured, embarked, and conducted to the Continent. The frigate instantly on discovering they were captured, despatched boats to rescue them, but to no purpose. From the cruel treatment which they experienced on their march, being put into stables, barns, common gaols, &c., allowed nothing but seamen's fare, with not a farthing of money in their pockets, they were so exhausted on their arrival at Verdun, that both the officers were seized with a violent fever. Mr. Thos. George Wills, an excellent officer, now a post-captain, recovered in a short time; but his companion lost the use of his limbs, and was confined to his bed, with little or no intermission, until July

1808, when he burst a blood-vessel and expired without a groan. He lived with me the greater part of that time.

But to return to the thread of my own Narrative. We continued at Verdun from July 1804, amusing ourselves by study, and in the winter by skaiting, &c., until August 1807, when I began to consider my situation minutely, and to deliberate upon my unfortunate captivity: those deliberations had the effect of making me very uncomfortable and dissatisfied; nor could I afterwards reconcile myself to study, or to any amusement whatever. I reasoned with myself, that I was losing the prime of my youth in captivity. I saw no prospect of peace, or an exchange of prisoners; no hope or possibility of being promoted in my present state, nor of recommending myself, through any personal exertions, to the notice of the Admiralty. I was deprived, while in France, of being able to afford my country, my friends, or myself, the least assistance. The youthful visions of the

glories of the naval service again came over me; but sadly were my spirits broken when I reflected, that my hopes of joining others in the strife of honour and patriotism were destroyed, unless I could rescue myself from bondage.

In this horrible state, almost of stupefaction, I remained for some days; when my poor friend Ashworth observed to me, that he and Mr. Tuthill, a particular friend, a midshipman also, had been canvassing the cruelty and hardships they laboured under; and had, in consequence, formed the intention, if I would join them, of transgressing, and getting deprived of their permission to go out of town (what the French deemed parole), and making their escape to their native country. This was to me the most flattering intelligence—it was what I had been revolving in my brain for some days. We accordingly met at an appointed place to deliberate on the best method of putting in execution the exploit we were about to commence, and agreed that it was necessary to procure

knapsacks, provisions, bladders to contain water, &c., prior to our getting closely confined; as we should be under the necessity of travelling by night, and of concealing ourselves in the woods during the day-time.

Having, therefore, provided all the requisite materials, viz. files, gimlets, saws, and other articles which are needless to mention, that, in case of being taken, we might be able to break our fetters and escape from the slavery and punishment we were well aware would await us;* and Mr. Ashworth and I having waited upon Lieutenant Pridham, to request he would withdraw his responsibility for us, which he accordingly did, we commenced by missing one *appel:* but, to our great astonishment, this breach of conduct was overlooked and forgiven.

* They made midshipmen, notwithstanding their officers were responsible for them, attend two *appels*, or musters, per diem; the not appearing at the exact time was formerly a fine of three livres (2*s.* 6*d.*), but afterwards the offenders were sent to Sarre Louis, or Bitche, the *dépôts* of punishment.

We next remained out of town very late; this was also forgiven, though we even got into the guardhouse. In short, it was several days before we succeeded in being deprived of our passports, or "permissions;" and we suspected, or rather felt confident, from the lenity shown to us, that our design of escape was suspected. Our personal honour, as well as that of the navy—and, indeed, of the English nation in general—precluded the possibility of our attempting to escape whilst we were upon what was deemed, by the French commandant, parole; but now, upon consulting with several of our own officers, they agreed with us in opinion, that, under our present circumstances, no such scruples ought to restrain us from any efforts we might be disposed to make for the recovery of our freedom. We were literally under close confinement; and with the reflection that, perhaps, so favourable an opportunity of getting away might never again be afforded to us, we were not slow in forming our resolutions.

It was on the night of the 28th of August, 1807, that we determined to take French-leave of our "prison-house;" and we had provided an excellent rope to enable us to scale the ramparts. Each had procured his portion, or quantum, of between three and four fathoms; but that which Tuthill had obtained was merely thumb-line. This, of course, was tailed on, or put at the bottom of the rope, in order that, if it gave way, we should have the less distance to fall.

It may be imagined that our hearts beat high with conflicting emotions. That great sufferings were to be endured, and great dangers encountered, but little interested spirits so young and ardent as ours; or, they were rather overwhelmed by that love of daring and honourable enterprise which often stimulates youth as well as manhood to the greatest and best exertions. On one side we had to reflect upon the mortification of capture, with an increased severity, and, what to us seemed infinitely worse,

a prolonged duration of confinement; whilst, on the other, should success crown our determined efforts, our hearts thrilled with the thoughts of once more walking the deck of a British ship-of-war, in all the elation of a confidence that we were serving our king and our country in a righteous cause, and that we might in time partake of those honours and glorious distinctions which she never fails to bestow upon all who merit them in the profession of arms. With such reflections did we separate, fixing upon a rendezvous at one hour before midnight.

I returned to my lodgings; but it is necessary for me to observe, that on my way I happened to meet with a friend, a Lieutenant Essel, of the navy, who, with the greatest frankness, communicated to me that he had come to a resolution to attempt his escape from France; and he expressed how much he wished that I would accompany him. This singular coincidence naturally excited in my mind a suspicion that he had arrived at a knowledge of

our secret, and I declined giving him a direct answer for the present; but I reflected that, as he did not mention either of my companions, it was a proof that he did not know of our design, or that he exercised a prudence which might render him worthy of confidence. I quitted him, repaired to my comrades, and communicated to them all that had passed. After a consultation, upon a point to us so momentous, we agreed that he might join our perilous expedition, provided that he was not in debt, and that he could otherwise escape from the town without dishonour. Very high feelings and scrupulous notions of honour pervaded our naval officers. Our new comrade satisfied us upon all these points. He assured us that he had been deprived of his passport or "permission;" that he had settled all his affairs; and that he had a surplus of 50*l.* to join with our funds in meeting the difficulties we were but too sure to encounter. Under these circumstances, we all cordially shook hands; and never

did four young adventurers attempt an exploit under a more friendly and gallant resolution to share a common fate.

The time so long expected arrived; and at the hour before midnight we met at the appointed spot. How much were we chagrined and vexed to find, that not only at this late hour were the sentinels unusually on the alert, but that — what seemed more extraordinary — great numbers of people were passing to and fro. We were obliged to defer our escape to the night following. We took different routes, and returned to our respective places of confinement, still inspired with the greatest desire to revisit our native country; still drawing visions of what we yet might do in the English navy; and still elated with the hope of regaining that, the love of which so predominates in a Briton's breast — LIBERTY.

I confess I felt the greatest regret at quitting my poor sick relative, our only other comrade, M'Grath; nor could I make him acquainted

with the step I was about to take, without experiencing an emotion impossible to be described. His feelings at our separation were as acute as my own.

The sea-coast, of course, was the point fixed upon for our destination; and we agreed, that about Estaples was the most likely part to procure a boat.

The anxiety and uneasiness which we felt the next day were beyond description. Some of our countrymen who called to see us, *en passant*, threw out such insinuations, and made such remarks upon our conduct of late, that we were under the most serious apprehensions of being shackled, and on the road to Bitche, before the much-desired hour, eleven at night. "The ——," says Shakspeare, "fears each bush an officer." We were well aware, that there were several Englishmen employed and paid regularly, for conveying the most trivial occurrence that might take place amongst the prisoners, to the French general. I have

frequently known prisoners of war, through malice, to be taken out of their beds in the night, fettered, and conducted, under an escort of *gens d'armes*, to the *dépôts* of punishment, without ever being informed of the crime or fault of which they had been accused; and merely from some of those miscreants giving false information, in order to be revenged for any private animosity they might have had against the person so treated. These spies were so numerous (I repeat it with regret) that it was morally impossible to know them all; consequently, the most watchful and cautious amongst us were liable to be entrapped. We fortunately, however, escaped their unnatural and detestable snares.

The long-wished-for moment at length arrived: the intermediate time had passed in great excitement. We met. Every thing seemed quiet, and favourable to our escape. We were in the spirit to take every advantage of circumstances, or to create circumstances, if creating

them were possible. In a few seconds, by the aid of our rope, and by the assistance of a friend, Alexander Donaldson, many years back my shipmate, a master in the navy, and afterwards a prisoner of war—he was a native of Portsoy, in Banffshire, but is now no more — we got down these most formidable ramparts of between seventy and eighty feet high; we descended, to our surprise, with little damage, except the loss of some of the skin from my hands. This was caused by the whipcord part of the line, which we were not able to grasp firmly, and it brought my companions altogether on my back and shoulders, in the ditch, before I could move or extricate myself. Happy were we to find ourselves, so far at least, at liberty. Our course was N.W. Each man buckled on his knapsack, arranged his implements and weapons of defence, and, full of the spirit of determined adventure, and of resolute suffering, we started upon our course.

The next morning, the 30th August, 1807,

at about three o'clock, the day began to dawn, and, as we had run during most of the time since we had quitted our miserable imprisonment, we conjectured that we were at least five British leagues from Verdun. We determined not to approach any houses, nor to expose ourselves during the day-time, except in a case of the greatest necessity.

We were, fortunately, close to the very wood which we had pricked off upon our map for our first halt: it was in the vicinity of Varennes.* We instantly entered this wood, and, after a long search, we succeeded in finding a thick part, though, unfortunately, it was contiguous to a footpath. However, we hid ourselves so

* Here Louis XVI., his queen, sister, and two children, were arrested, in their flight from the Tuileries, in 1791, and were conducted back to Paris. I have seen the *gend'arme* who arrested them; he is now an officer, and is much noticed by the present government. It was said that, at one of the turnpikes which the unfortunate monarch had to pass through, the man exclaimed, "*Je vous connois, mon roi; mais je ne vous trahirai pas.*"

well, that, unless information had been spread of our flight, and people came purposely in search of us, we had no apprehension of being discovered. In this our lair we lay with tolerable comfort and security, until about nine o'clock, when our confidence vanished, and we were greatly annoyed; for we found the pathway to be much frequented, and the voices of passengers, and of children who came to enjoy their Sunday morning in nutting and sporting in the wood, greatly distressed the whole of us. Fortunately none of the nut-trees or bushes were very close to us, and at noon we had the happiness of seeing the intruders hurry home to their dinners. We likewise took our refreshments, and thought it wise to destroy our hats and to supply their places with white beaver caps, *à la Française*, with which we had provided ourselves.

At seven in the evening it was tolerably dusk, and, having shouldered our knapsacks and made all other arrangements, we left the wood,

and recommenced our march, making a direct N.W. course through the country, over hill and dale, mountain and plain; traversing ploughed fields, wading through bogs and marshes, leaping ditches, and clearing all enclosures with a buoyancy of spirit that gave us astonishing strength and vigour: nothing could intercept or retard our progress. The happiness we felt was inexpressible. The freshness of the open air, the active use of our unconfined limbs, and the hope of ultimate triumph and liberty, made us consider ourselves as regenerated creatures.

But, before daylight (on 31st August), it began to rain heavily. We discovered a wood convenient for our concealment, except that it was contiguous to a farm-house. After much of anxious deliberation, we resolved, however, to secrete ourselves in it; for we reflected that it might not be possible for us to reach another before daylight might betray us to the stirring peasantry, compared to which any less chance of danger was preferable. I, at this moment,

perfectly recollect the spot in which we placed ourselves, and, even at this distance of time, I seem to behold all that passed around us.

We provided ourselves, after a long search, the wood being excessively thin, with a tolerably good sort of hiding-place; but we could distinctly hear the people in the farm-yard conversing, which, I need scarcely say, caused us great alarm. Our situation all this day was very deplorable. On entering our hiding-place, we were wet to the skin, and it continued raining without ceasing until late in the evening: the wet we received from the branches and leaves was much worse than if we had been in an open field without a tree. Our chief employment was squeezing the water out of our clothes and stockings. Our store of provisions, which principally consisted of light biscuits and sausages, was very much damaged. At dusk, about the usual hour, seven, after taking a little refreshment, we bundled on our knapsacks and accoutrements, and proceeded on the old course,

N.W. We walked a good distance this night, the weather being more favourable.

Just before daylight, on the next morning (Sept. 1), we entered a most excellent, thick wood, admirably well calculated for night-walkers. We took some refreshment, and endeavoured to sleep a little after the fatigues of the night, and after congratulating one another at being thus far successful. At about ten, we were alarmed by the voices of people apparently close to us. We found that they were passing on an adjacent pathway, which we had not before perceived; but we were too well placed to be under any dread of being discovered. The number of squirrels, rats, mice, and vermin, about us this day was very great. Having made our customary preparations, at seven we got out of our lurking-hole, and proceeded to the border of the wood, on the side towards which we had to direct our course. On our arrival we discovered some labourers still at work, in a field close to the outside of the wood, which

obliged us to halt until they disappeared. We then proceeded with some anxiety, as we saw a village exactly in our track, and which we could not avoid without making a very great circuit. In about two hours after we had quitted the wood, we found our course suddenly impeded by a ditch or moat, and, upon sounding it with our clubs (which, by the bye, were of a tolerably good length), we found it very deep: in fact, its depth by far exceeded any thing we could have anticipated. We surveyed this formidable obstruction or barrier, marching first in one direction, and then in another, without being able to come to any resolution, although we all knew and felt, that, by some means or other, cross it we must, or submit to be recaptured.

At length I discovered one part which was, or seemed to be, narrower than the rest, and, in this case, of no alternative, which was becoming more desperate every minute, I resolved to make one great effort, and to try to leap

over. I accordingly gave myself space for a good run opposite the narrowest spot, and, leaping with all my force, I landed on the opposite bank some feet beyond the margin. The channel turned out not to be so broad as it had appeared, and, knowing that it was exceedingly deep, I had been the more anxious to secure a good landing, lest I should fall back into the stream. The event, however, was like escaping from Scylla to be lost in Charybdis, or rather the reverse; for, in avoiding the water, I had to find my injury on the land. The consequence of the great impetus I had given to my leap was, that, the opposite bank being gravelly and hard, and my knapsack lifting and coming down with a sudden jerk, immediately my feet touched the ground, I was thrown on my side, and my right knee was twisted in the joint to such a degree, that I absolutely thought it was snapped in two.

In this condition I remained extended on the ground, and whilst in the most excruciating

pain, I kept cautioning my companions to be more careful, and to guide themselves by my experience. They, at last, effected the leap, and joined me without injury or inconvenience. They examined the joint, and found, to my inexpressible joy, that the knee was not broken; but so unfortunate an accident, at such a critical moment, deprived me of every hope of being able to prosecute the long and difficult journey that we had to accomplish. These reflections distressed me to such a degree, that my ideas became distracted. I was not more than from fifteen to twenty leagues from the miserable prison, upon my escape from which I had just been felicitating myself. I could not, of course, expect my comrades to remain with me; and I had the wretched prospect of being abandoned by them, and left either to suffer and perish in the open field, or to be captured, and my recovery to be succeeded by the gaol. Instant death I thought by far preferable; but Divine Providence deigned to interpose its clemency,

and taught me the useful lesson—to prefer, to despair, a confidence in its wisdom and mercy.

My comrades paid every attention to my injury. They chafed the joint, and rubbed it with the small portion of spirits with which each of us was provided. I found great relief from this application, and, in a short time, with their assistance, I was able to get up and put my foot to the ground.

To their repeated inquiries about my knee, I replied that I felt much better, though, in fact, I had still but little hope of being able to continue with them; but I was unwilling to discourage these brave fellows, who declared their determination not to quit me.

This noble declaration inspired me with enthusiasm, and gave me fresh vigour and courage. I made an effort to step out, but was under the necessity of requesting that one would assist me on each side, which they did. Thus we moved on slowly, and passed the village about which we had been so anxious. My knee,

I was happy to feel, was gradually getting better; and we managed to proceed in this state about three leagues, when we discovered a very fine, commodious wood.

It was about two o'clock on the 2d, when my comrades proposed that we should rest in this wood during the ensuing day: they would not, on my account, proceed further. Besides, it was uncertain whether they might fall in with another wood before daylight.

No determination could be more congenial to my feelings than this. I was excessively dejected and fatigued. Having, at length, found a proper part of the wood, each took his position and enjoyed a little refreshment, and then endeavoured to take rest; but so violently did my knee pain me, that I was obliged to have two of my friends lying with their whole weight on my leg, thigh, and right side. They fell fast asleep in a very short time, yet I could not close an eye. The distressing and melancholy reflection of being left behind, in consequence of my

illness, still recurred. The thought of being picked up and conducted to some dreadful dungeon, or some other ignominious habitation, was constantly present; and, while agitated with such ideas, what mortal could think of sleeping? Thus occupied in thought, wavering between hope and despair, I remained nearly two hours, my friends in a sound sleep the whole time. At last, finding their weight on my side troublesome, I extricated myself from them without awaking them, or causing them the least disturbance.

I now imagined that I had an excellent opportunity of trying whether I could rise and walk by myself; and I accordingly made an effort to stand, which I accomplished with some difficulty; but, on attempting to walk, so great was the pain, and so excessive the weakness of the knee, that I immediately fell backwards on the earth. The necessity of proceeding was so urgent that, during the ensuing day, I availed myself of the opportunity of my companions'

being asleep to repeat the experiment, but with no better success. In order, however, to encourage my kind and brave associates, I kept answering all their inquiries with assurances that I felt much better.

At the usual hour of the evening, all arrangements being made for pursuing our march, we stole to the edge of the wood, which I never expected to be able to leave. I was supported by a friend on each side, as I had been the night before, and most burdensome must I have been to them. On arriving at the outskirts, we found it too early to leave the wood. There was a very high tree at the point to which we came, and it was proposed that Mr. Tuthill should climb up it to discover the nature of the country that lay before us in our course. This he immediately did in good style, being intrepid and active; and, to our great satisfaction, reported it to be a beautiful plain, without wood, river, or any thing to impede our progress. From the excessive height of the tree, we had no

doubt that he could extend his view over several leagues.

We at length proceeded, and I insisted that my friends should leave me in the rear, to hobble on and struggle for myself. I felt, I confess, extremely dejected, but was determined not to expose my feelings. At first, the pain I endured was terrible; however, confident that there was no fracture, though with excruciating agony, I at length firmly brought my leg to the ground, and contrived to limp with the assistance of my club. We had not advanced above a league, when we perceived a beautiful vineyard right before us. We halted to taste the grapes, which were a heavenly relief to me, as I was almost exhausted. The grapes, though sour, revived our spirits amazingly. After eating a great many, we amply filled our pockets. In a short time I found my knee become more easy, and the gloom that had so very much depressed me was rapidly disappearing, until I at length proceeded in excellent spirits. In about an hour we pro-

videntially arrived at an orchard, and, finding the apples delicious, we cleared our pockets of the grapes, and replaced them with this exquisite fruit. We then proceeded with great joy, though not with quickness, each congratulating me on my getting on so well. Indeed, I never was more surprised than at the sudden change in my frame altogether, my knee improving every mile I walked.

At daylight on the 3d (of Sept.), we were much alarmed, not being able to make out a wood in any direction. At last, to our unspeakable delight, we perceived at a small distance a copse or kind of little forest, not more than three or four acres in circumference. We repaired to it without hesitation, and found it thick and well adapted for our concealment. Having pitched upon a convenient spot, we deposited our knapsacks, disburdened ourselves of our apples, &c., and, after being refreshed with a little biscuit and sausage, together with a desert of fruit, which we could now afford, we betook

ourselves to rest. I had not closed an eye since I had received the hurt; but at this moment I no sooner extended my weary limbs upon the ground, than I was in a profound sleep; nor did I awake until roused by my comrades, who were alarmed by the voices of two men, who came to work close to our hiding-place. We could hear them so very distinctly, that we were of opinion they could not be distant more than fifty paces; their conversation was chiefly respecting the towns of Charleville and Mezières: they continued their work until sunset.

From hearing them mention those towns so repeatedly, in addition to other parts of the conversation, we were convinced of our being too far to the northward of our proper course. Travelling by nights, frequently extremely dark, though we had an excellent compass, it was impossible to avoid sometimes erring a little, more especially whenever a river turned us out of our proper direction. Those labourers being gone, which we did not regret, as the reader

may suppose, we commenced our preparations as we were accustomed, and, at the usual time of the evening, proceeded on our march towards the coast. My knee, when we started, was painful and stiff, but it gradually grew better by exercise.

At midnight we came suddenly upon a small town situated in a valley; nor did we perceive our error until it was too late to retrace our steps to avoid it. However, as it was an open town, we trusted that at so late an hour of the night, we might escape through it without danger. We accordingly advanced as quickly as possible; nor did we meet a single soul until we got into the opposite fauxbourg, when we had to encounter a peasant on horseback. Mr. Ashworth asked him the name of the town we had just passed, and he informed us it was Neuville. We thanked him, continued our route, and that night travelled a considerable distance. In our journey we had often experienced a dreadful scarcity, or total absence,

of water; and this night our thirst was very great, but we were able to allay it by the fruit we had gathered in the orchard.

At about three o'clock on the morning of the 4th of September we entered a very convenient wood; and here we resolved to lie concealed for that day. We refreshed ourselves with a very small quantity of our biscuit and sausages, and had occasion to remark that our stock was getting very low, notwithstanding we had been so abstinent that strength for our journey could scarcely be supported. The dew was extremely heavy, and the ground very wet; so, making our beds of heath, leafy branches, and grass, we sunk quietly to sleep. I found myself happy beyond expression, in consequence of my knee daily getting better.

The next evening, at the usual hour, we quitted our covert, but under distressing circumstances, for our fruit was exhausted, we had not a drop of water, and our thirst was excessive. We moved forward, almost perish-

ing for want of moisture for our parched mouths, and throats, and gasping lungs; and in vain we endeavoured to console ourselves by the hope of finding some brook or rivulet to relieve our anguish.

We travelled nearly seven hours in this horrible condition, without being able to discover a drop of water except at one place, where there was a large ditch in which flax was steeped, or deposited. I flew to it for relief, and, though its stench was abominable, I might have drunk copiously, had not my companions assured me that the consequence would be an immediate death. So raging was my thirst, that I had still great difficulty in restraining myself; but, at last, I proceeded without tasting it.

I have been in all climates, almost in all parts of the universe; have endured excessive thirst at different periods of my life; have drunk vinegar, salt water, and even sucked the tarred sails on board a ship to endeavour to

assuage that agony, but I solemnly declare that I never felt any thing equal to what I suffered from thirst during this night.

Finding no chance of obtaining water, at least in our direct course, we unanimously agreed to approach the first village we should discover, for the purpose of procuring a supply from some of the inhabitants' wells. An opportunity soon occurred, and we directed our steps with the greatest eagerness to this much-desired spot; but, previously to our arrival at the village, we descried a small orchard. My friend Tuthill, always on the alert, and naturally, as I before observed, active and expert, scaled the orchard-wall in a very short time, notwithstanding the constant barking of a dog on the premises, and he returned with a supply of apples. They were very small, and of the wilding-kind; but they answered our purpose, and alleviated our distressed state. We passed through one extremity of the village, got a supply of what we stood so much in need of, and proceeded;

keeping more to the westward than we had lately done, in consequence of the discovery respecting Charleville. Having plenty of water, we now got on apace, and with lighter hearts and brighter spirits.

CHAPTER V.

The Journey pursued—An unexpected Danger dexterously avoided—Montcornet—The River Serre—A Bivouac in a Wood—Dangers of being Shot—Making free with an Orchard—Crossing the Oise—A Want of Food, with no Commissariat—A Mode of obtaining Provisions—A Cabaret and a Village Fête—Kindness of the Peasantry—Wretched Illness, Deluges of Rain, and Nightly Bivouacing, found to be inconsistent—Petit Essigny—Wringing drenched Garments, and Drying them over fading Embers—A miserable Landlord—A Change of Quarters—A Hovel—Luxuries of a Hay-loft—A Samaritan of a Hostess—Wretched Sufferings of Mr. Essel—Resort to another Village—A kind Landlord—Sympathies of Deserters—"A fellow-feeling makes Men wondrous Kind"—The Luxuries of a Clean Bed after the Mud Beds of Bivouacs—Resort to another Village—A Motherly Hostess—Poor Essel's extreme Sufferings—A lucky Road-Acquaintance—An excellent Specimen of human Nature—Virtue and Happiness in humble Life—The charitable Baker—Dangers from Sportsmen to Gentlemen hiding in Woods—Mr. Essel's Illness disappearing—Increased Speed not always safe to Fugitives—Coldness of the Weather—Town of St. Pol—An hospitable Farmer—A French Harvest-Home—Hesdin—Passing a fortified Town at Midnight—Nieuville—Estaples—Turned out of a Straw Bed—A new Inn,

with a *Gen d'arme* in Disguise in the Kitchen—Trepidation —A Search for Money—Bribing a Landlord—No Boat to be had—An old Shepherd too cunning for a young Lieutenant and Midshipmen—The escape from a Traitor's Den — Extreme Difficulties — High Hopes — Another Traitor—Despondency and Resources.

DURING the next day, the 5th of September, nothing particular occurred. At dawn, having found a convenient wood, we concealed ourselves, as usual, during the day. At night we resumed our journey, and at about eleven we came to an immensely broad road. Imagining that it led to Castelet la Capelle, a small town in Laonnois, which lay nearly in the direction of our route, we agreed to keep this highway. The night was serene and beautiful, and our progress, under all circumstances, rapid and cheerful.

About midnight we found ourselves all of a sudden at the beginning of a street, the buildings of which were large, and the town surrounding it appeared considerable. This discovery astonished us the more, as the place had

neither rampart nor fortification of any description; and, hitherto, we had been of opinion that there was not in France a town of this magnitude that was not well fortified. However, we had no time for debate or consideration, for we perceived lights in many of the windows; dogs were barking; we heard human voices in different directions; and our danger was extreme. Luckily at this moment we happened to perceive an opening, towards which we instantly made, and found it a by-lane which conducted us clear out of the town; but we had several canals, mills, &c. to pass in the suburbs before we got again into a direct track. However, we at last succeeded, and had the felicity of congratulating each other on so fortunate an escape; but we still remained entirely ignorant as to what town this was; which made us determine to inquire at the first house we should approach, and in a few minutes an opportunity offered.

We perceived several huts on the road-side. Mr. Ashworth and myself advanced, leaving our

companions concealed; and, knocking at the door of one of the huts, a man (as we supposed in bed) asked what we wanted? We answered we were poor, distressed travellers, quite hungry and faint, and should be glad to know what distance we were from the next town. He told us, not above a mile from Montcornet.* We asked if he would have the goodness to sell or give us a little bread, as we had travelled a long way, and were quite weary. He and a woman replied, they would if we could call in the morning — they were determined not to open the door at night: so we marched off and joined our companions, having made the discovery we desired. We then proceeded, anxiously wishing for daylight, that we might ascertain on the map whereabouts Montcornet was situated.

A little before daylight, on Sunday the 6th, having crossed an inconsiderable river called the

* This town is seated on the banks of the river Serre, in Picardy. We learned since that it is famous for serge manufactories.

Serre, we halted in a wood not more than three leagues from this town. It was very thin, which made us shift and change our position many times before we could find any part calculated to conceal us. At last we selected a spot, which we made tolerably comfortable by breaking branches and placing them all round us. We were very much disappointed on inspecting our map, to find we were not near so far advanced as we had supposed; however, notwithstanding this, we considered ourselves to have been very fortunate. The weather was hazy, with drizzling rain, which made us uncomfortable; but we managed to sleep a little.

At about two in the afternoon we were alarmed by a fowler and his pointer. The dog approached us very near, and as soon as he perceived us began to bark and yell. The master came also close to us, and kept whistling and calling to his dog, which, at this time, was a great distance from him, having retired precipitately on discovering us. The man kept on in a

direct line in pursuit of the pointer: we perceived his legs and feet distinctly as he passed; but, from our position, were certain he did not see us. Our trepidation may easily be imagined, as well as our extreme joy at our hair-breadth escape.

At the usual hour we quitted our lair, and had the happiness to find that some apple-trees, just outside the wood, were covered with very excellent fruit; with which, I need scarcely observe, we all filled our pockets and knapsacks. What little biscuit we had now remaining was literally crumbled to dust, which made this supply of a juicy fruit almost a luxury. The night was excessively dark, and we had a number of awkward and severe falls.

Lieut. Essel was now getting very much exhausted. His fatigue was extreme, and he became unable to keep up with us. From the great alteration which we had observed in his appearance during the last two or three days, we began to apprehend that he would not much

longer be able to pursue the journey at any pace, and would be obliged to stop on the way. We resolved, however, at all events, to keep with him as long as possible. The alternative would be very painful.

We crossed the Oise (a tolerably broad river) this night in two different places. The Oise is very serpentine, and is divided into several branches, which perplexed us greatly. Our comrade Essel was getting worse, which obliged us to halt earlier than our usual time, and we were fortunate in finding shelter in a very commodious wood.

On the next day, Monday 7th, we surveyed our stock of provisions, and found it miserably low. We were alarmed at the discovery; that of biscuit, or rather biscuit-dust, we had not even a pound; and of our only remaining article of food, sausage, our store was about in proportion. What to do in this critical situation we were very much at a loss to know. One thing, at least, was certain, that to exist

we must eat, and that to eat we must have food; and hence the conclusion was evident, that our plan, in which consisted our safety —the system of avoiding towns, keeping away from houses, and shunning the approach to any thing connected with human nature, could not be adhered to much longer, whilst it was difficult to conceive what other scheme could be adopted.

After a very long, and not a very pleasant discussion, we came to the conclusion, that, as Messrs. Tuthill and Ashworth were the most meagre in their appearance amongst us, and, consequently, the most like Frenchmen, they should endeavour to procure some bread at the first retired and lonely habitation we should see early in the night; for we feared that if we waited for a later hour, our reception might be equally inhospitable with that in the vicinity of Montcornet.

Accordingly, at about nine o'clock, we perceived a house directly in our course, which

appeared to answer the description required. The two Frenchified gentlemen advanced to try their address: Lieutenant Essel and myself remained seated close to a thickset hedge. We continued in that position some time, waiting the result of our friends' embassy — my poor companion complaining grievously of the alteration in his health. Finding they did not return, we imagined that they had, perhaps, met with a good reception, and were enjoying themselves; and we agreed, as the house was directly in our way, to pass by it carelessly, and, accordingly, we walked on. Just as we had passed the door, they made their appearance, with a young man dressed like a peasant. They joined and informed us, they could procure no relief at that house; but that there was a small village within a few hundred yards of us, and that this young man was going to shew them a public-house in it, where they could get supplied with every thing. I was decidedly of opinion that this was a great deal too kind on his part; and

I advised them, therefore, to send this guide back, as we certainly could find the house without his assistance; but he insisted on conducting us—inquired if we were also of the party; and presently the village was in view, and was very small, at which I rejoiced greatly. Many people were moving about, and our guide informed us it was a *fête* day.

The public-house was now before us, and the young man pointed to it, saying, "You may enter without fear," and quitted us. I did not like this last observation. However, we were by this time on the threshold—a number of people were in the doorway; there was no alternative, and in we went. The house was crowded with both sexes, dancing and amusing themselves. The dancing ceased immediately after we entered; every eye was fixed upon us. We called for a place where we could sit and refresh ourselves, and were shewn into a room. We asked for some bread, cheese, and wine; got them and ate heartily, although we could not

boast of much comfort, or of being much at our ease. Several of the peasants and their wives came and seated themselves close to our table, pressing us to take some of their *gâteaux*. From our general appearance, and particularly from our caps and knapsacks, they evidently mistook us for conscripts going to the army. We told them we were going to Guise, and were obliged to travel day and night by forced marches, in consequence of our regiment being ordered away, and of our having remained at home too long. Fortunately for us they were not an inquisitive people; and did not question us about the number or the officers of the regiment, nor about any of our circumstances. We called for our bill, and desired our host to bring us a large loaf of bread and a bottle of brandy, as we might want them before our joining our regiment at Guise. This being done, they all wished us success, and we parted from them most glad to get rid of their company.

On getting clear of this village, how delight-

ful the fields appeared to us! Our chests expanded with the breath of heaven, and our hearts were made glad by the freshness of nature. We were restored, and proceeded on our journey in a high strain of cheerfulness. We amused ourselves with the conversation we had had with the farmers and their wives, and with describing the different sensations each of us had experienced whilst we were supporting our feigned characters. Poor Essel, however, complained greatly of fatigue and weakness, and my knee affected me a little every night when we commenced our route, though the pain and stiffness gradually wore off as it got into exercise. At daylight we stopped at a wood joining a farmhouse, on the banks of the Oise.

About seven in the evening of Tuesday 8th, we recommenced our march, after having been greatly alarmed by a genteelly dressed lady and two children that had passed us, with a servant, who went before her shaking the brambles and knocking the wet off the trees. They came so

close to us as to touch the very bush that covered us. About half-past eight we again crossed the Oise in two places, and once more were obliged to pass through a village to get to the bridge that led over that river.

At daybreak of the 9th, after a tedious and difficult march, having traversed a number of deep-ploughed fields and stubble fields, over hills and across valleys, we found ourselves again in the open plains, with poor Essel scarcely able to move. This was by far the worst situation in which we had been placed since we began our journey. On surveying, with the utmost anxiety and attention, all around us, we thought we could descry trees; but they were at a considerable distance, and out of our course. We nevertheless approached them. It commenced raining very fast; and, when we had reached the much-desired spot, it proved to be only a thin orchard, with a few scattered apple-trees. We still kept walking on, being well assured there was no shelter for us in our rear, at least

that was not at a great distance. We soon discovered a little village in the very direction we were going, and near it appeared a small wood. We advanced tolerably fast. Poor Essel was obliged to lag a great way behind. Meeting an old peasant, we inquired the name of the village, and found it to be Petit Essigny. He told us there was a pathway on the right of it, if we wished to avoid passing through. We were, he said, five leagues from St. Quentin.* This old man's remarks appeared to us very singular: he took his leave, and we walked on. It rained, and the morning was advancing, it being now nearly eight o'clock. What we imagined to be a wood, adjacent to the village, proved, upon approaching it, to be only a few shrubs; on arriving at which we found they were pretty thick, and the grass very high, the inclosure being surrounded by a quickset hedge.

* This town was formerly called Augusta Veromandorum, a strong and famous town, seated on an eminence, by the river Somme. It is twenty-two miles south of Cambray.

We instantly got through this hedge, and lay close down. Our situation was very unpleasant; the grass, which was excessively wet, added to our misery, having been nearly soaked to the skin before we entered it. The rain off the bushes came literally upon our poor bodies in sluices; but this was considered preferable to the risk of going into the village, where we suspected that *gens d'armes* might be lurking, the place being so near a large town. We continued in this wretched plight until about four o'clock, when Mr. Essel became quite weak and exhausted, and the rest of our little party were not much better. This induced us to quit this inhospitable place and endeavour to get shelter in a house, let the consequence be what it might.

Accordingly we approached a single hut at a short distance from the village; entered it, and found in it a poor old peasant and two lads, who proved to be his sons: they were shivering over a few cinders, and appeared to be very poor and miserable. We requested that they

would make a good fire and allow us to dry our soaked clothes, and to warm ourselves; and this they did, but not until we had promised a liberal payment. They seemed to be astonished at our appearance, and greatly at a loss to know who and what we could be. The fire being at last made, we gladly proceeded to wring the water out of our clothes, and endeavour to get them dry. We made the old peasant bring us some bread: he also gave us a little butter, which by chance he had in the house; the old dame, his wife, having taken all the rest that morning to St. Quentin market.

We imagined that we should do extremely well, if the old man would allow us to remain all night, even by his fireside, as it rained so excessively hard, that it was absolutely impossible to attempt to travel. This was intimated to our venerable host, accompanied by an assurance that he should have his reward; but, without hesitation, he declared to us in the most positive manner that this was impossible. What

were we to do, for it seemed that sort of night which made the gentle Cordelia declare that she could not turn out her enemy's dog; and yet we Christians, and gentlemen, and officers to boot, seemed to be in danger of becoming the wretches whose "houseless heads and unfed sides" were so pitied by the mad King Lear. Our reflections were not of a very consolatory character.

At length the old curmudgeon of a host told us that there was a public-house in the village, where we could get supplied with every thing; and he added, that as it was so very near, there could be no great difficulty in our getting to it. At this moment two peasants were passing his door, and, determined at any rate to turn us out, he called these two fellows to guide us to the place. The men appeared very civil, but, had it been the reverse, there was no alternative; so we paid the old Cerberus for his scanty fire, his mouldy brown bread and sour butter, and left his house with the disposition to shake the very dust, or rather, in this case, the very mud, off our

shoes on his threshold. The figure of this flinty host of ours is still before me. He was a tall, thin, misshapen fellow; and the effects of his cadaverous and hideous countenance were not improved by a most sinister squint, and a malign ill-natured sneer, that might well warn the unfortunate that they had little of humanity to expect at his hands.

Under our civil guides we soon arrived at the village, and, to our inexpressible joy, found it to be a small and miserable place. Our guides shewed us the public-house and took their leave. We entered this poverty-stricken hovel, and found that the good landlady had nothing to give us but bread and eggs; and further, that there was not a bed in the house, her guests being accustomed to sleep in a loft where there was plenty of clean hay. This, however, was luxurious to poor wanderers, who had fed and slept in the manner in which we had ever since we had escaped from prison. But we had to

study appearances, and as there was no other inn (as they termed the wretched hovel) in the village, we seemed to hesitate whether we should remain here or proceed to the next considerable town, or to St. Quentin, and we accordingly inquired how far it was off. Our hostess replied, that it was not above three or four miles to a tolerably large village, but that St. Quentin was two leagues distant. We pretended to be much chagrined at this information, and told her that it rained too hard for us to go that distance; and, inconvenient as it was, we would remain with her and sleep in the hay-loft that night, in preference to being exposed any longer to the inclemency of the weather. This was, indeed, exactly the kind of tavern and lodgings that suited us; I was never more pleased than at this reception. All fear of exposure or detection was banished, and our minds were for once at rest. We had a good fire made, completed the drying of our clothes, got some supper, and retired to the hay-

loft. The kind woman gave us two blankets to cover us. We found this accommodation sufficiently good, and we very soon fell fast asleep.

The next day, fortunately for us (as it kept us under cover), was very bad, raining without intermission. We continued in our loft, except one of us, who went to procure breakfast, and to inform the landlady (who we found was a widow) that we would stay until evening, in hopes that the rain might cease. We sent her our tattered garments, stockings, &c. to mend. We could move about without much fear in this place, as we found they were utter strangers to the sight of a *gen d'arme.* The good lady took us for conscripts, and commiserated our situation. She had a brother in the army, then in Prussia; and she brought us a letter to read that she had lately received from him.—I said that I had served in the same regiment, with which she was very much pleased.

At about seven we paid this worthy old hostess, and took our leave. It was a clear

star-light night, and the weather promised favourably; but the ground was so excessively slippery and muddy, that we could scarcely prevent ourselves from falling every step we took. At about ten, Mr. Essel was seized with a violent bleeding at the nose and mouth. We feared that he had burst a blood-vessel. This, together with a dysentery, which he had been troubled with for some time, rendered him so excessively weak, that he could not move a step. We were greatly affected at this misfortune, and agreed to convey him to the next house we should find. Fortunately, the village alluded to by our landlady, when we first arrived at her house, was in sight, and the view of it gave our sick friend fresh courage; but we were apprehensive it was too large for our security; however, we were resolved at all events to procure him a lodging there, and to be vigilant, and if we perceived any danger, to be off instantly. About half-past eleven we arrived at this village, and, to our joy, it proved to be by far inferior to what we had ex-

pected. Mr. Ashworth went into a public-house to reconnoitre, and to inquire if food and shelter could be supplied to our suffering friend. He returned shortly with the glad tidings that he had succeeded, and he assured us that, from all he could observe, he was convinced that we should incur no danger by remaining at the inn for the whole night, and even for the next day. The joy this intelligence spread amongst us is hardly conceivable. We wished very much to continue together if possible; and, with respect to myself, in gratitude to my three companions for their very great attention and kindness to me in my late sufferings, I was determined not to desert or abandon any of them that might be indisposed, unless impelled by the necessity of such circumstances as would fully justify the separation. We all accordingly agreed most cordially to remain with our unfortunate friend, sincerely hoping that he might by the next night get rid of his malady, and recover some portion of his strength. The bleeding had ceased, a

symptom which we construed to be much in his favour, and at last we all entered the public-house, the sick gentleman and myself bringing up the rear.

We were very civilly received by the landlord, a decent young man, who shewed us into a nice, clean, and comfortable back-room, in which there was a separate bed for each of us. It was rather startling, however, to hear him assure us that "we were perfectly safe with him;" for this guarantee of safety, even if sincere, at least implied that we were objects of suspicion. Our doubts, however, were soon dispelled, for he added, to our great relief,—"I have been situated in a similar manner once myself, and shall ever have a fellow-feeling for others under such unhappy circumstances. When I quitted the army as a conscript, I travelled several hundred miles by night, and concealed myself in woods in the daytime." This was consolatory, and we gave him *nods* of assent and approbation; for it was dangerous to speak, as a word or two would

have led to a conversation, in which it might not have been convenient to answer questions with truth, and not easy to evade them by ingenuity, or even to defeat them by falsehood. When the merry monarch, in the farce of "Charles the Second," was asked by the jolly Captain Copp "What ship?" this single and short query at once exposed the king's frolicsome disguise in a seaman's dress; and had our landlord asked us "What regiment?" or if, like Captain Copp, he had had a disposition to gossip of old campaigns, we must soon have exposed our gross ignorance of "the land service." Fortune, however, now seemed to have taken us in tow, and we had a landlord of a less inquisitive nature.

We took our refreshment with the keenness which shewed that we had not lately been accustomed to good cheer, and we found, or flattered ourselves that we found, that our sick friend was already getting better. Each retired to his bed, as happy as any creature in the universe. Heavens! What a paradise! It is

not in my power to express, or to give any idea of the delight and happiness I felt at being once more in a comfortable bed, with every thing neat and clean about me. We had been thirteen days and nights without once taking off our clothes, except the preceding night in the hay-loft, when we had our garments repaired, and those days and nights had been passed, the former in sleeping, as chance might be, in mud, bog, or quagmire, or on dry or wet green leaves, whilst the latter had been spent in toiling upon empty stomachs and with parched throats, over all the bad grounds and awkward impediments which must be encountered by travellers, who have private reasons for avoiding highways or beaten tracks. Such sufferings are wonderfully conducive to make men feel and be thankful for the comforts of a good bed; and I need not observe that we all remained in bed, not only throughout the night, but throughout the greater part of the next day.

During this (Friday the 11th) we felt our-

selves under no apprehensions, and had no need of exercising our ingenuity, as our landlord had expressed his acquaintance with our habits of avoiding daylight, and journeying in the dark. As soon as it became dusk we paid our bill, which was moderate, with gratitude; and, taking a most friendly leave of our simple-minded and kind-hearted host, we again buckled on our knapsacks, and resumed our habit of travelling at night-time. Essel was greatly refreshed; we found ourselves comparatively quite strong and well, from the last night's repose. This was an exceedingly dark night, and we had a great number of ploughed fields to go through, which fatigued our poor friend greatly: we were frequently under the necessity of resting and waiting for him.

At daylight on the 12th, it began to rain incessantly and in torrents; we were then very near a small village. Our late success made us more bold than we had been at our first setting out, and having no wood to shelter us, we resolved to go into the village. We found it very

well calculated for our purpose, and got admitted into a public-house; where, after procuring something to eat, we requested permission to lie down to rest a little in any place, expecting to be shewn into a hay-loft,—but we were agreeably surprised; for our good old landlady put sheets on the only two beds she had, and told us we might rest ourselves on them until night: we perceived that she also supposed we were conscripts. She got Mr. Essel something warm, and appeared very attentive. At dusk we paid the good dame, and, as usual, began our march. Poor Essel complained a great deal, and my feet began to swell; although they were not painful, I feared some bad consequence from their swelling. About ten, our friend declared he could not advance a step further; consequently, we sat down to allow him time to rest. We were much concerned at this, and did not know how to act; and were certain if he continued thus indisposed, we should be a long time before we arrived at our destined spot. He began himself

to think he should be obliged to stop at some house, and felt inclined to let us proceed, as he clearly saw the risk we ran in approaching houses and villages; but this was repugnant to our feelings. We agreed to wait with him a day or two longer, to see if he should improve, but were greatly at a loss where to take him for the night. Thus meditating, we were joined by a man going our road. He saluted us very kindly, and expressed his sorrow at seeing our comrade so ill. The worthy fellow was in a cheerful mood, and evidently of a communicative nature, and seemed disposed to let us know all about himself and his affairs, which was by far more convenient to us than had he expected equal frankness on our part. He informed us that he was a baker, and was returning from the place where he had been at work the whole week, to his little family, in a village about two miles off. The honest fellow appeared to derive a sort of melancholy satisfaction in dwelling upon the memory of his wife, who, he added mournfully, had

recently died, leaving him three young orphans. The good-hearted man concluded his unsophisticated, open garrulity, by informing us that he had two good beds, to which he assured us that we were welcome, and he gave us this welcome with such a frankness and warmth, that no cynic could suspect guile in such a character, or could be unwarmed by gratitude at his benevolent nature. The picture he drew of his happy home and family, at any time would have been most beautiful to the sailor, the "Mariner of England" whose

> "March is o'er the mountain waves,
> Whose home is on the deep."

But exceedingly delightful was it to us poor, weary, and forlorn mariners, under all our sufferings and perilous adventures, with the uncertainty whether we should regain our homes, or be led back to "durance vile" as prisoners of war, under a penal sentence for having attempted an escape from confinement. However, the honest baker added to his other assurances, that

he would procure for us every thing we could want or might desire. It was evident that we were always to be mistaken for conscripts *on a retreat,* for this our jolly companion assured us with a knowing look, adding, "that his village was small, and that there was no danger with him." Our hearts felt the truth of this, and withal its inestimable value. We gladly accepted his kind offers, and returned our most grateful thanks to the Divine Providence for its bounty and goodness, in having thus sent such a man to the relief of those who were under such difficulties and dangers that an escape from them seemed almost impossible.

We soon arrived at this poor man's dwelling, and he seemed as glad to receive us as if he had by good fortune unexpectedly found some friends or kindred that had been long absent and dear to his heart. He made a blazing fire, and bade the children get up and prepare the beds for our reception. This they cheerfully did, and then retired to their loft. We felt that we were

particularly safe with this poor hospitable stranger, and the whole domestic scene was, at least, calculated to impress upon us the truth that contentment, happiness, generosity, and the best feelings of our nature, are not the exclusive heritage of the rich. We warmed ourselves over his glowing hearth, wished him good night, and gladly sunk into our comfortable beds.

The next day, our hospitable friend procured us all things we wanted. In every respect nothing could have been more kind and liberal, than the conduct of this unpretending, humble, and good man; and the reader, in the sequel, will have further proofs of my just estimate of his character.

As we had promised our friend Essel, we waited until dusk on Sunday the 13th, and then paid our host liberally for all we had received. He escorted us a mile or two on the road and took his leave, as if sorry to part, but full of satisfaction that he had had an opportunity of so well performing a duty to those who were in the

extremities of need. Our companion found himself a little better, and even in tolerably good spirits. At about eleven at night we passed close to Bapaume, which I well knew from my former visit.

At a little before daylight on the 14th (September), we entered a wood, and found a very convenient place for our concealment. We conjectured that we were about five leagues from Arras.* At about eleven, we were alarmed by the noise and whistling of a fowler with a dog, and in a few minutes we heard the report of his gun; the shot rattled through the bushes in which we lay, and a partridge perched close to us. This circumstance alarmed us prodigiously, as we could hear the man and dog advancing

* Arras is the chief town of the department *du Pas de Calais*, province of Artois; it is remarkable for its fine church and well-furnished library. A great part of its fortifications were built by Vauban. It is seated on the river Scarp, twenty-two miles N.W. of Cambray: it was then a *dépôt* for British prisoners of war; they were all (with few exceptions) confined in the citadel; they amounted to about 3,000.

towards the very spot. To move would have been imprudent, since he was so very close that it was impossible to avoid being discovered. We waited the event, without the smallest hope of escaping from being seen—the dog advanced —flushed the partridge nearly at our feet—the fowler close to us: fortunately the bird took an opposite direction to the spot where we remained concealed, and the master and dog followed; and in a few minutes relieved us from the consternation they had thrown us into.

This was the second providential escape we had had from a fowler, or poacher: it is not in my power to give the reader a just idea of our feelings, they are much easier conceived than described.

At the usual hour, on the night of the 14th of September, we left our leafy concealment to commence our nocturnal progress; and we were put into good spirits by finding our friend's health greatly improved. We walked a great distance this night in order to make up for

our recent delays and stoppages, but we had nearly been victims to the old proverb, "The more haste the worse speed;" and we found that it was less essential to our safety to travel fast, than to contrive to stop at or before daybreak, within the reach of some wood sufficiently large and thick to hide us. At dawn, however, on Tuesday the 15th, to our great dismay, we found ourselves on an open plain, and we anxiously stretched our eyes in every direction, but could not discern the least appearance of a wood, although, to our alarm, we beheld several villages. As our comrade was much better, we determined to proceed, avoiding human habitations as much as possible. After we had passed by the first village, we discovered a copse, or shrubbery, near the second, so we quickened our pace, and advancing rapidly, we entered it at its part the most remote from the village. It proved to be merely a nursery, and but thinly stocked with small trees, or even shrubs; but we selected the spot most favourable to our object,

and happily we contrived to conceal ourselves in it until darkness afforded us the usual motive to our sortie. At eleven, as we were passing a small village, being excessively thirsty, and not able to discover any watering place, we agreed *to border close,* in the hope of being able to procure some water at one of the wells, with which these villages abound. Mr. Ashworth and our sick comrade were employed in getting some, while Mr. Tuthill and myself retired to a small distance, under cover of a quickset hedge. Two women and a man passed close by us; the women continued to walk on, but the latter halted and turned on his heel.—I was next to him; he eyed me closely, and exclaimed—"*Vous-êtes Anglois?*" To which I replied, "*Je suis aussi bon François que vous, je l'espère.*" This was the only time in the whole course of my life that I had felt afraid to acknowledge my country; but since that period, I have been frequently under the necessity of being of different countries, and of assuming different names.

The women hearing the conversation, called to the fellow "to come along, and mind his own business." He appeared to wish to remain; but, on their repeatedly calling him, he left us. Had we not been contiguous to a house, his curiosity might have procured him some striking marks of our resentment for his impertinent interference. Having been joined by our companions, we proceeded.

At break of day on Wednesday the 16th, we got into an excellent thick wood, and found a material change in the weather as we advanced to the northward; sometimes there was a sort of gray frost, which made us extremely cold before the rising of the sun; nor could we at all times receive the benefit of that heavenly body until noon, owing to the thickness of the part of the wood that we were (when practicable) obliged to occupy. We found an abundance of filberts, filled our pockets with them, and felt particularly happy at succeeding thus far. This was the last wood we expected to inhabit prior to our seeing

the sea-coast; and we were, at times, replete with the idea of its being the last night we should remain in the land of usurpation and tyranny. At the usual time we commenced our route, and left the town of St. Pol* about two miles on our left-hand side.

At about ten, our progress was impeded by the river Canche. After examining it in several directions without success, we agreed to send Mr. Ashworth to a farm-house hard by, to inquire the nearest place that we could cross; from whence he returned in a few minutes with one of the farmer's men, who had been desired to direct him, and assured us the people were extremely civil. It appeared to him to be a good place to get a supply of provisions—we were excessively hungry—and, as the passage across the river was immediately at the end of the farm-house, and as they had already discovered our number,

* A small town, in the department *du Pas de Calais*, province of Artois, about fifteen miles from Arras, and twenty-two from St. Omer's.

we mutually consented to put the farmer's hospitality to the test, and, if possible, to procure what we wanted. We advanced with the man, who shewed us in; and we were very kindly received by the master of the house, who conducted us into a decent back-room. The kitchen, when we first entered, was full of peasantry at supper.

The farmer's harvest had been that day finished, or gathered in, and he was giving his labourers a feast on the occasion, which, we were told, was an immemorial custom in that part of the country, throughout which many things reminded us of our own. In fact, we were now in the midst of a French harvest-home; and though the scene was gratifying, yet in our peculiar situation, we should have been by far better pleased had we been alone. All was joy and happiness under this rustic and hospitable roof, if I except the twinges of apprehension that now and then would disturb me and my friends. Nothing, however, could surpass the attention and kindness of this good farmer.

He supplied us spontaneously with every thing that his house could afford. Certain is it, that he took us for Frenchmen and conscripts, and thought, perhaps, that we were going to fight for the glory of France, under the eagles of the new emperor. Little did he suspect that we were English naval officers, encountering all dangers, and enduring all hardships, for the sake of once more fighting under

> " The flag that braved a thousand years
> The battle and the breeze."

As our host would not accept of any payment for what we had received, we made a present to the servant who was to guide us, and we took our leave of this good man full of gratitude for his kindness.

We conjectured that we were not more than seven leagues from Estaples, a town on the mouth of the river Canche, with a tolerably good harbour for small vessels, and which is said by some antiquarians to be the Portus Itius of Cæsar. —Vide Cæs. G. iv. c. 21; l. v. c. 2 and 5. This

put us in such good spirits, that even Mr. Essel, in spite of his weakness, was determined to go that distance before daylight. We quickened our pace, and proceeded with light hearts and full of hope.

We passed the strong town of Hesdin * at midnight, and, as might be supposed, we took care to keep a very respectful distance from it. At daylight on Thursday the 17th, to our great mortification, we found that we were at least three leagues from Estaples. We had exerted ourselves right manfully, and had performed our allotted task; but the journey was much longer than we had supposed, when we quitted the farm-house. A bourg, or municipal town, called Nieuville, lay now immediately in our route, without our having any means of avoiding it, on account of the serpentine course of the river. Neither wood nor any thing else to shelter us

* Seated also on the Canche. Philibert Emanuel, duke of Savoy, and General to the Emperor Charles V., built this fortress in 1554, after demolishing old Hesdin.

was in view. Our situation was most critical, and we unwillingly came to the conclusion that was obvious—pass through the town we must. Our object was to pass through it before any, or at least many, of the inhabitants could be up, and by dint of a quick pace; this we happily accomplished. However, after we had advanced a little through the town, we found the high road was getting too full of passengers, and as soon as possible we struck across the fields; but still, to our dismay, no appearance of a wood could be dicovered. Even in the fields several people were moving in different directions, and it was not much to our comfort that we observed many of them to be military. Surrounded by such numerous difficulties, we resolved to go into a small contiguous village, imagining, that even this would be less dangerous than to remain straying and wandering in the open fields. We arrived, about eight o'clock, at a hut in the village; avoiding the public-house, as there are in general police officers, or *gens d'armes*, lurking

around such places, when in the vicinity of large towns; and we were at that moment surrounded by dangerous spots; viz. Montreuil,* and Estaples, and were on the route to Boulogne, which was about ten or twelve leagues distant. We asked the inhabitants if they could provide us breakfast? they replied, "Yes, we can give you some milk-soup and bread." We approved of this repast very much; and, after paying them, we requested they would have the goodness to allow us to repose ourselves for a few hours in some convenient place: but this they refused—hinting, that they suspected that we were deserters from the camp at Boulogne. We assured them, upon our words of honour, they were very much mistaken; that, on the contrary, we were going that way, but were so very much fatigued, and having a sick comrade, we wanted a little rest. After importuning them a long time, and pro-

* This town is seated on a hill, at a small distance from the Canche; it has a castle, and is in a very strong position.

mising a good reward, they allowed us to go into a barn-loft full of straw; we were particularly obliged to them, and perfectly contented with this apartment: but, when nearly settled, and each had got covered over with straw, to our great mortification and annoyance, the owner came, having repented of his granting permission to enter it, and insisted upon our instantly quitting his premises. All our rhetoric with this fellow was in vain. So we were compelled to quit our habitation about eleven o'clock, and walk towards another more respectable village. We now advanced boldly, verifying the old proverb, that "Necessity has no law," or that,

> "When a case cannot be worse,
> The most desperate is the safest course."

We inquired of a shepherd, on entering the village, if he could direct us to a public-house? and he pointed out one to us. We proceeded, but with little hopes of escaping from being discovered or arrested; however, we determined to call for a

private room the moment we arrived at the cabaret, being in hopes (if we could avoid police officers in passing to a private apartment) we might stand a chance of remaining unnoticed until night. In this we succeeded; and, being supplied with refreshments, we were provided with a suitable apartment immediately. The only person in the house was a girl, of about eighteen years of age, who made us a comfortable fire, and shook up two beds, that we might rest a little if we pleased. Seeing that there was no danger, we pretended to be quite at our ease, and coolly asked her where her father and mother were? She replied, "That the former was watching the sheep outside of the village, and that the latter was gone to Estaples." We found, by her description of her father, that he was the very man who had directed us to her. She asked us, "If we were not conscripts going to the camp of Boulogne?" We answered in the affirmative; and begged her not to let any body enter our room, as we had several things

to settle amongst ourselves, and wished to be in private. She promised to obey us; but little did her acquiescence bring confidence or comfort, when she added, that there was at that moment a *gen d'arme* in the kitchen in the disguise of a peasant. This was enough to render us tremulous; but even this was not all: for she informed us that this *gen d'arme* had just come from Boulogne with a party, in order to procure forage for the *gens d'armes'* horses there. We had evidently got into a hornet's nest, or almost within the jaws of the lion; but, preserving as much the appearance of tranquillity as possible, we informed her that we had not the least desire to see any body but her father, with whom we wished to have some conversation. She promised to send for him as soon as her guest in the kitchen had quitted the house. The "soon" was devoutly to be wished; and glad were we when, in a short time, we were told that he had taken his departure. The girl now sent for her father; and her mother also returned. We

were in great hopes that, as these people were very poor, we might be able to induce them to procure us a boat, through the medium of some of their friends,—the fishermen on the coast,—who might not be temptation-proof, or impervious to the influence of a few *Louis d'ors.* Convinced that nothing could be accomplished without this all-powerful metal, each of us began to search in the different parts of his garments for his due proportion. We had been obliged to take the precaution of stitching what gold coin we had in the seams of our clothes, that we might not lose it in the event of our being arrested. To our great sorrow,—and I may add, astonishment, — Mr. Essel discovered that his gold coin, to the amount of 45*l.* sterling, had slipped out of a pad which he had contrived for the purpose of concealing it, and which he had always worn round his neck in his neck-handkerchief; nor could he recollect having untied it but once since we set out, and that was at the worthy baker's cottage, where he suspected he

had left it. This baker had appeared to be an honest man; and, as I have already observed, had behaved excessively kindly to us. It was possible that the money might have been left there without our host having seen it, until after our departure; but, as the poor fellow could have no opportunity of restoring the treasure to its right, and now embarrassed owner, the reflection afforded us no further consolation than that of our having our confidence unshaken in the integrity of a person whom we had been led to esteem, and from whom we had experienced kindness. The loss was to us, at that moment, very distressing, but not irreparable, as we still had a tolerably good sum, and Lieutenant Essel and myself had two gold watches, sufficient, as we trusted, to inspirit the shepherd, and induce him to assist us. He at length arrived; when, after taking every feasible means of enjoining secrecy, relying upon this fellow's honesty and good principles, we disclosed our situation, object, and what we were, and promised to reward

him very liberally, provided he could procure us a conveyance across the Channel. We were certain, we observed, that he must have a number of seafaring acquaintances on the coast, and we would make it well worth their trouble to assist us. He hesitated very much at first; but, having shewn him a purse, and repeating our promises of reward, he assured us he would try every possible means, and he declared that, at all events, we were perfectly safe under his roof, and that he would proceed to see what he could accomplish. We were greatly elated, and were almost certain of succeeding, from his not raising any obstacles. Our anxiety for this fellow's return is not to be described: every individual that passed appeared to be somebody he had sent, or was about to bring, to agree with us for our passage. The much-wished-for moment, as we thought, at length arrived, when the old shepherd, with a demure countenance, opened our door, and, having closed it again with the utmost caution, began to inform us, " That all his search

to procure a boat had been ineffectual; that the fishermen along the coast were constrained to bring their boats to Estaples, and lay them up there, whence they dared not move without a passport from the commandant of the town, as well as a soldier as a guard in each boat, to prevent their having communication with the English cruisers, or going without the limits. They were also under the necessity of going out and returning only in the daytime." To our vexation and grief, the fellow added, "that we could not remain in his house any longer than the dusk of the evening, as he was obliged to return an account to the mayor of the village of every stranger that might be with him after dark, taking his passport at the same time for the mayor's inspection;" and the fellow concluded all this any thing but comfortable information and kindness, by lifting up his hat, scratching his head, and saying, "I hope, gentlemen, you will reward me for my pains, and for keeping counsel." The conduct of this worthless creature was so

unexpected, and so contrary to all that we had reason to hope from his previous promises, that we were absolutely confounded. We stood amazed,—staring at each other; and for some time were unable to utter a word. At length, I broke silence, and observed, " That it was the fault of his *better half;* who appeared to us, from the instant we had seen her, to be a bitter, malignant creature. She, no doubt, had been consulted;" and her sour looks and conduct, upon every occasion, convinced us all that this opinion was well founded.

Having nothing to expect from this unfeeling and unprincipled couple, we paid them liberally for all we had had, and for all they had done, or pretended to have done; and as soon as it was dark we left their, to us, not agreeable abode. The point of departure had been a subject of altercation; for, as soon as they had received our money, they insisted upon turning us out: whilst we, for our own purposes, as resolutely maintained our right to remain until it was dark.

Both of the inhospitable pair had repeatedly threatened to call in the mayor, in order to arrest us, if we remained a moment longer; but this could scarcely have been worse than running the risk of being seen in the daytime, or of falling into any snare that the wretches might have laid for us. However, darkness at length shrouded the earth; and we left this unpropitious roof with no very merciful, or, we fear Christian, feelings, towards those that drove us out.

When in the open air, we were utterly perplexed as to how we should act, and as to what course we should steer. We began to imagine that what we had been told respecting the boats, might be partly true. Sometimes we supposed that it would be better to proceed towards Rotterdam; at others, we thought of recrossing the Canche, and directing our wearisome course towards St. Vallery; at others, we imagined it would be better to repair to any port where we might be likely to find an American, or other neutral vessel, in which we might escape: but

at last we agreed unanimously to cross the river, as, at all events, the safest plan for that night and afterwards to proceed to some villages that might be close down on the sea-coast. We were thus consulting, or had just come to this conclusion, when the shepherd's daughter made her appearance, and gently told us, " That her father had sent her to shew us a house where we were sure of finding a person that would be of service to us, and who would put us across the river; which was," she added, " by far the safest side." We thanked the girl, who appeared the whole evening very much affected at the conduct of her parents; and she returned, begging us not to mention who had directed us,—which, of course, we promised, and we kept our word. One of us was now deputed to reconnoitre. It was about ten o'clock, — the house was on the side of the road, — and a number of soldiers were passing on their route to the camp: this circumstance retarded our project, as we were obliged to keep within a hedge, until the military

had passed, and by which time it was eleven o'clock. Then Mr. Tuthill (the deputed person) advanced; and soon returned and informed us, that he had seen a man who had given him some hopes, and that he would rejoin us shortly. This was most welcome news. The person made his appearance, and told us he would direct us to a friend's house on the other side, who would, he believed, do what we wished. Heavens! what joyful intelligence! "His boat," he said, "would put us across as soon as she should be afloat, the tide of flood was then making, and he would return again to where we were in an hour, by which time he supposed the boat would be ready. We were now in the highest spirits. An hour ago we were in the depths of despair; and, even immediately before the present moment, we had been almost, I may say, overwhelmed by a sense of the innumerable dangers by which we were surrounded. Our feelings of joy were heightened by contrast. With the vividness of lightning flashed across my mind all our past sufferings;

and, from the number of dangers which we had almost miraculously escaped, it struck me that we were special favourites of Fortune, and that we were about to rêap the glorious object of all our wishes. Habit, however, had taught us distrust and caution; and we shifted our situation, lest this stranger might turn out to be a false friend, or a scoundrel sent to deceive us, and we placed ourselves where we could easily discover whether he had any auxiliaries with him when he came back. At the appointed time he came to where he expected to find us, by himself, which convinced us that his intentions were more honest than we had supposed. In a few minutes, we were carried to the opposite side, where he secured his boat, and guided us to the house above-mentioned, assuring us that they were people we could depend upon, and who had many friends, fishermen, on the water-side. He would not enter the cottage, or hut, but quitted us at the threshold; having received a sufficient recompence for the trouble we had

given. We knocked repeatedly at the door. It began to rain very heavily; nor could we gain admittance, until we had given many assurances that we were particular friends, who only wished to be sheltered a few minutes from the inclemency of the night. These protestations at length gained us permission to enter.

CHAPTER VI.

A False Direction, and an appalling Repulse — A Bribe refused — Preference of a Pig-sty to a Night-storm — A Deluge, and Shelter in a Barn — The luxury of a Bed of Hay — A Fatal Resolution—Dangers of Fugitives journeying by Daylight — A Market-day at Estaples — Passing through Crowds not very convenient for run-away Prisoners of War — An attempt to reach the Sand-hills on the Coast — Desperate Circumstances, and the *Nil Desperandum* — A Bold Progress through a Despicable Village — The last House — Parching Thirst, and begging for a Draught of Water—An Acquiescence, or Reply, in the shape of two Custom-house Officers — A close Capture — A clever Fiction well devised, better sustained, and totally defeated — Getting rid of Suspicious Goods — A Contest of Politeness and Good-breeding — An Examination before the Mayor — Americanism, and the American Gentleman — An Awkward Exposure — Clever Schemes blown to Atoms — A *Mittimus* to Boulogne Gaol — An Examination of our Persons and Clothes — Our Fate sealed, and Hope destroyed.

Both the man and woman of the house stared at us with great amazement; and, finding that we were utter strangers, they begged to know

what we wanted, and why we had disturbed them so unseasonably? This reception was rather portentous and appalling, particularly from its being so contrary to what we had been taught to expect. But humility becomes the unfortunate; and we humbly begged that they would make themselves quite easy, for we were absolutely come as friends in great distress, to solicit protection and assistance, and we assured them, that it was far from our intention to inflict upon them the slightest injury, or even annoyance. This appeased them: and we proceeded to state that we were Frenchmen, who wished to be conveyed as quickly as possible into some part of Normandy or Brittany. We made them very liberal offers; but, to our dismay, they were thoroughly "temptation-proof." To all our bribery their hearts and minds were as cold as asbestos. The woman at last observed, "that it was true that she had a brother who was a fisherman on the sea-coast," and our eyes glistened at what we thought was the beginning

of good news, but then came the sad addenda, that his boat had been taken round to Estaples, and that, when he wished to fish, he was obliged to embark under the surveillance and regulations which had been described to us by the shepherd. Alas! alas! we began to fear that the shepherd was not the egregious liar we had taken him for. The woman's story was confirmed by the husband; and both assured us that, upon our knocking at their door, they had suspected us to be *gens d'armes* in disguise. These fellows, it appeared, were frequently in the habit of practising such tricks upon their countrymen. The good old couple, however, soon insisted upon our quitting their house, and in a manner which proved that they were not accustomed to make use of much ceremony. In vain did we point out to them our miserable plight, and expatiate upon the extreme badness of the weather. We talked of the excessive darkness of the night, the torrents of rain that were pouring as if heaven and earth were

coming in contact, and we entreated them to allow us to shelter ourselves in any barn, cow-house, or even pig-sty; but we might as well have appealed to an Egyptian mummy or statue of Jupiter Ammon. In proportion as we were mendicant, they became peremptory, and even fierce; and at last we were obliged to depart in what seemed little less than a deluge. As soon as they saw that they had got us over the threshold, some few and faint feelings of commiseration seemed to touch their obdurate breasts, and they had the charity to point out to us a direction which led to a barn, at some distance from a farm-house or any dwelling; and they assured us that this barn was full of hay, and was seldom visited, so that we could very safely remain concealed in it until the following night. They further advised us to proceed either to Dieppe or St. Vallery, as the two ports at which it was most probable that we should succeed in procuring a boat. All hope had nearly left us; our perplexity was extreme:

we saw clearly that we were surrounded by wretches in whose word we could place no confidence, and to whose feelings all appeals were worse than ridiculous. The weather, however, and the approach of daylight, obliged us to put the veracity of their last information to a practical test. We shortly discovered the barn and farm-house, and had the good fortune to arrive at the former a little before daylight. We found it full of hay, as they had stated; a most timely relief for us, being quite drenched with the incessant rain, and all over mud and dirt. Each soon found, or made, a convenient hole for himself through the hay, taking the precaution to work a good way down, and to cover himself well over, lest our steps into this place should lead to a suspicion, and we might be found out; indeed, we were suspicious even of the very people who had directed us hither, so bad was our opinion now of the folks we had to deal with. We fell into a most profound sleep; nor did I awake until nine

o'clock in the morning (Friday, Sept. 18), when I heard my name called repeatedly by Mr. Tuthill. He proposed that we should quit that place immediately, and get down to the sea-side, as the day was the only time to succeed in procuring a boat, from the method they had taken of securing all vessels at night. To me this proposition appeared replete with temerity; the others did not approve of it, but they did not take much pains to oppose it. I used the most forcible arguments I was master of to dissuade them from so rash a proceeding; and pointed out the caution we had observed in the inland parts of the country, as the only thing that had insured our success in arriving where we then were, although there had been much less danger in the interior than on the sea-coast, where there would be, of course, a strict look-out kept by custom-house officers, *gardes de côte*, &c. My observations gave rise to a number of arguments; and, if I recollect right, Mr. Tuthill observed that he would quit the

barn and proceed by himself, if we persevered in remaining any longer there. I then suggested, as the better plan, to wait until night: we could, in the event of not succeeding, always make this our rendezvous, and could return to it before daylight,—procuring subsistence at some lonely cottage during the night. All my rhetoric was in vain: they appeared determined to try their fortune by daylight. I then requested, at any rate, that they would wait until noon,—the usual time for the country people to dine,—as we might with the more ease get away unnoticed. This was at last agreed to; so we remained buried in the hay until the hour of noon: when, unperceived by any body, we crept out, and, getting upon the highway, proceeded in the direction we had intended to take. We put a bold front upon disastrous affairs, and, with apparent intrepidity, we marched on; although, to confess the truth, I had the greatest dread of being stopped every moment, and at every step. Our sufferings had been long, and

almost insupportable: our plight was wretched; and, as the French would say, we were in "*a false position:*" whilst our *physique* had not been improved by our recent habits; but, worse than all this, to my mind at least, was the dread that all our gallant bearings against dangers, and our fortitude under sickness and misery, should, at the expected hour of reward and fruition, terminate in exposure, capture, and in an insulting march back to ignominious imprisonment. The ruling passion of my life was LIBERTY; and whilst there was a prospect of hope, or even a bare possibility of reaching the temple of Freedom, no obstacle could obstruct me: difficulty only stimulated exertion and inspired enterprise, and danger itself seemed to infuse almost pleasure into its excitement; but now it did appear to me, that we were struggling against what it was impossible to overcome. However, I rallied my spirits, although one thing was much against us,—unluckily, it was market-day at Estaples, and the road was crowded with

the people going to and returning from the ferry-boat. Nevertheless, it was consolatory, and, under our circumstances, flattering to our vanity, to find that we had had such talent or cleverness at disguise, that not a soul, we imagined, suspected our "false character." So perfectly did we look like Frenchmen, and what we pretended to be, and wished to look like, that we attracted no attention whatever. I began to feel a reviving confidence, and to think that we might be able to reach the sand-hills, which are numerous in the neighbourhood of Estaples, and are close upon the margin of the sea. If we reached these, it was evident that we could conceal ourselves until night; and, under our precarious circumstances and extreme danger, our only plan was to walk directly towards them, on the principle that no man, whose object was flight and escape, would walk through crowds of enemies in open day. This was the only course that we could adopt; and, though all our calculations proved to be miserably erro-

neous, and our hopes fallacious, still I had nothing with which I had to reproach myself.

We kept advancing towards the sand-hills with all the appearance of carelessness and confidence, but with a quick, and, as far as we could assume appearances, a bold and firm step; and we arrived at last at a poor sorry village, and through which we had to pass. We felt scarcely any diffidence or misgivings, and had actually got to the very last house, when our poor friend Ashworth felt extremely exhausted, and expressed that his parching thirst obliged him to ask for a draught of water. On all such occasions, every one of the party was consulted, and the majority of votes constituted the *ultimatum*, or decision; and whether a long train of success, or a long succession of narrow escapes, had made us vainly confident, I cannot say, but not one of us saw the slightest danger in Ashworth's entering this house. It was impossible to suppose that so wretched a village could contain either troops or *gens d'armes*;

and as we had passed through the place without attracting any notice whatever, we did not imagine that there could be any danger in entering the last house at its extremity. The glorious sea, with all its inspirations, was before us, and we laughed at what we had undergone, for our hearts were light, and our minds were full of the glad prospects of our attaining to all our wishes.

Ashworth entered the house, and we advanced slowly, lagging and loitering for him to rejoin us. His absence appeared very long—unnecessarily so. Suspense and impatience gave way to suspicion, and suspicion was succeeded by alarm. I shall never forget my conflicting emotions,—they grew stronger and stronger every moment. At length, Mr. Tuthill broke silence, and expressed a wish to go and ascertain what had detained our companion. Essel and myself remained on the side of the road, anxiously looking out. They very soon appeared; and, to our inexpressible grief and mortification, were conducted by two armed

men in an uniform entirely foreign to us. These soon proved to be *douaniers*, or Custom-house officers, with which, at that period, the coast of France abounded; but none of them had ever fallen under our observation or cognizance. I clearly perceived that these fellows had taken both our companions into custody, from the manner in which they approached. When they had joined us, Mr. Ashworth introduced me to them as Captain Cox, of the ship Favourite, of New York:—the story fixed upon in case of being stopped. We had been cast away near Marseilles, and all hands had perished, except Florence Heath (Mr. Ashworth), mate; William Dixon (Mr. Tuthill), supercargo; and Mr. Essel (whose new name I now forget), passenger. We were bound to Barcelona. Cargo — slaves and cotton. Only the supercargo and mate could speak French. Consequently, I had an opportunity of disclosing my sentiments more freely to those who stood interpreters. They appeared to commiserate our situation, and had

not the least doubt but that what we alleged was true. "But they must take us," they said, "to the mayor of the town, who would, no doubt, grant us passports to proceed to some sea-port, whence we could take shipping for America, or any other place we pleased." We expressed our warmest thanks for this mark of their attention; but (if they pleased) we added, "that we did not wish to put them to the inconvenience of going out of their way on our account." They replied, "That it was entirely in their way; and it was impossible we could proceed along the coast without papers: they were only astonished how we had crossed the kingdom of France (or, more properly speaking, the empire) without being arrested. We had been much to blame in not having procured passports prior to our quitting Marseilles." We assured them we were ignorant of its being in the smallest degree necessary, that we were born in a country where nothing of the kind was required, and where it would be deemed a very

great insult to ask any person where he came from, or whither he was going. We, of course, alluded to public functionaries; for we well recollected the proverbial character of the Americans for inquisitiveness, and Dr. Franklin's story of his putting up a printed board over his apartment, whenever he arrived in an American town, so full of all particulars relating to himself, as to render it impossible, as he thought, for even American curiosity to intrude upon his privacy with a question. The doctor, however, found himself in the wrong. Our unpleasant visitors heard our story of Americanism with seeming complacency; but they shrugged up their shoulders, appeared to think that "it was strange, wondrous strange," and they concluded by another shrug, and a *nonchalance* declaration, that it was "*bien différent dans ce pays ci.*"

We of course regretted that we had not been more enlightened upon the laws and customs of the "*pays ci,*" and at length we

arrived at the ferry-boat, and in a few minutes found ourselves in the town of Estaples, under different circumstances, and in a different company, from what we had desired or expected. We still entertained hopes of escape; but, unfortunately, each of us had about his person many things most inconvenient to be inspected by French *douaniers*, and most unlikely to corroborate our fiction of our being shipwrecked Americans. My brains were set to work to "get to windward" of this quicksand, and I whispered to my "mate" to intimate to his unwelcome or awkward friends, that I was fatigued, and that I wished to take some little refreshment at any convenient inn, before I had the honour of appearing before the mayor. I cannot accuse myself of harbouring inhuman propensities, and yet it would have been too severe a trial of virtue, had I had the option, of sending the honour of my introduction, the mayor himself, and the *douaniers*, to the bottom of the ocean; I would, at least, with cordiality,

have sent them to that durance vile to which they were about to send me. However, our civil conductors consented that the fatigued gentleman should take what refreshment he stood in need of, and of which, I need scarcely say, they intended to be participators. We arrived at a *cabaret*, were allowed to enter, were conducted into a good room, and, as if I were the most easy and indifferent gentleman that ever proceeded from America, I called authoritatively for a supply of bread and wine. During this repast, we alternately had an excuse for retiring: I need not say that we took care to get rid of almost every article that might prove that our fiction had not the saving grace of probability.

We at last made the best of a very bad or unpromising case; and, putting on the appearance of unconcern and mirth, we followed our conductors. They told us, that they were under the necessity of waiting upon their captain previously to going before the mayor, and I assured

them that we had not the slightest objection to this visit, whether of ceremony or duty; but they allowed me not even this frail chance of escape, for they politely told me that I must accompany them: of course, I vied with them in courtesy, and appeared before the captain. He received me and my companions with politeness, and all things seemed to indicate that the interview might pass off without danger, until he politely told me that he must send for the mayor to be present at our examination. This changed the whole complexion of the case; and I am sure the effect must have been visible in most of our countenances. At length, "His Worship" arrived, not at all to our comfort; but what rendered his presence more annoying was, his bringing with him "*an American gentleman.*" It is said that the society of a gentleman is always desirable; but the ghosts did not strike more terror into "the soul of Richard," than the reality of this American gentleman's appearance struck terror into ours. The mayor and

the American gentleman engaged us, "yard arm and yard arm." Their cross-examination was worse than a raking fire. We had only to repeat our former story. At last our unlucky genius, the American gentleman, plainly stated to us, that they suspected us to be Englishmen, and which we had no means of disproving; and he added, that we were to be committed to the prison of Boulogne, until the authorities heard from the American consul at Paris, or until they were thoroughly convinced of the veracity of our statement. These were disastrous "untils;" and it struck me that if they waited for the alternative of them, we might remain in gaol to eternity. To establish such veracities, was out of the question; but to prove them by the means of the American consul at Paris, was giving us a sad chance. The result was, what less sanguine and less interested men might have anticipated,—we were to be ordered to a dungeon, under an escort of *gens d'armerie*. The brigadier, who seemed to have all the

hundred eyes of Argus condensed into two, asked if we had been searched. The answer was in the negative. "Search them instantly," cried he; "and," he added, "depend upon it they are Englishmen, who have escaped from one of the *dépôts*." The fellows were obedient to command, and we were immediately put under as severe a scrutiny as ever man was subjected to. I was the first person to be rummaged. My pocket-book was opened, and in it were several English letters, with other papers equally calculated to disprove the veracity of my being an American captain, shipwrecked at Marseilles. My resource was to say that my pocket-book belonged to a cousin, who had perished with the wreck. But any thing I could affirm was rendered useless; for on the others were found maps of the departments that we had gone through, with several other papers, which identified us to be what they suspected.

However, we still persisted in being Ameri-

cans: they remonstrated on the folly of such an imposition, and ordered us into a dungeon, assuring us that we should be now very roughly treated, and considered as dangerous people; whereas, a frank confession might cause some mitigation. After a little deliberation, we clearly perceived the inutility of holding out; so we at once acknowledged who and what we were. The brigadier assured us, that he had been confident from the moment he first saw us that we were English, and he would now do every thing in his power to comfort us under our present embarrassments, but he had no superior officer of his corps nearer than Boulogne, where he should send us the next day; and, for that night, he would allow us to go to an inn to get ourselves a little in order, but with a strong escort; and we should be obliged to provide that escort with every necessary, and to pay the men six *livres* (five shillings) each for the night. This we readily agreed to. Once more we were prisoners: our state of mind was truly miserable.

At the inn we bought a new shirt and pair of stockings each, and got our old ones, which were in a sad condition, washed and mended. They supplied us with tolerably good beds, of which we were extremely anxious to take possession. After supper, we were in the act of going to bed, when an order came from the commanding officer of a camp adjacent, to conduct us to his tent — which was quickly put in execution. He appeared, in manners, the reverse of the general character of the French. He perused all my letters, which were of no consequence to any one existing, except myself, — and which were never returned to me — and declared, he was certain we had emissaries on the coast, otherwise, we could never have attempted so perilous a journey. This was, at least, a compliment to our daring enterprise; and when we assured him that we had had no connexion whatever with the people on the coast, he replied with a "Bah!" and concluded with an "Ah, — the fishermen on our

coast, unfortunately, are too much attached to the English."

Our conversation terminated, and we were taken back to our inn. Distressed as we were, we immediately retired to rest our wearied limbs. Nature was exhausted; and we sunk into nature's balm — "sweet sleep" — too afflicted and worn out to reflect, or to care for the reflection that the dawn would see us in progress to gaol.

CHAPTER VII.

Our Entrance into the Gaol of Boulogne—A Sheaf of Straw for a Bed for two people not a luxury in a gaol, though it might be in a loft or barn—Tantalizing Sight of Old England's Flag and white Cliffs—A Gaoler's Supper and a conscientious Bill—Another Examination—A Route to Verdun—The Gaol of Montreuil—A Selfish Englishman—Arras and Englishmen Kind and Liberal—The Gaoler Kind, and the Commandant full of Indulgence—Bapaume—The Baker, and inquiries for our lost Money—Cambray—Château Cambressi and its horrible Dungeon—Landreci—Our Awkwardness in Chains, Handcuffs and Fetters—Gentlemen not used to Handcuffs—My dislike to them—Avesnes—Information that we were to be Shot—English Spies, and French Antipathy towards them—The Dungeon of Avesnes—A dungeon Companion, who had killed and cut up both his Parents—A night of Horrors and Lunacy—Hirson, a Town without a Gaol but with a Dungeon—An unfortunate Distinction—A Supper and its Consequences—The Discovery of our Implements of Escape—A double-barrelled Pistol passed off as a Substitute for a Tinder Apparatus—Maubert Fontaine—Extreme Severity against us—A new Dungeon and a fellow-prisoner—Reciprocal Services—A novel mode of hiding pistol-barrels—English Kindness and French Fury—Chaining Prisoners to a Cart—Mezières—Arrival at Verdun—Separated from my Companions—Reflections on being Shot—A close Examination—Questioned in relation to

Buonaparte — Allowed to join my old Associates — Our general joy — Another Cross-examination — A Re-committal to Prison — Our Fate determined — The Dungeon of Bitche — Our Punishment for our attempted Escape — The Rev. Lancelot C. Lee, a *détenu* — His Generosity — A supply of Money when quite penniless.

THE next morning, the 19th Sept., 1807, we arose with little comfort from reflections of the past, and less of consolation from prospects of the future. It was clear that our plans were entirely abortive; we were defeated and captured, and our wiles, stratagems, and ingenious contrivances, that would have been so laudable if attended with success, were likely to become mortifying, if not ridiculous. At eight o'clock, our *gens d'armes* escort entered the inn, and soon placing us in a cart, conducted us to Boulogne. We arrived at about two in the afternoon, and were unceremoniously handed over to a regular gaoler, a Mons. Verjuis, who gave us in custody to one of his most expert turnkeys. The fellow shewed us into our apartment. Shortly after, two small

sheaves of straw were sent us as substitutes for beds, and a bucket of water accompanied them, as our sole refreshment. Tuthill, astonished at this supply, asked me seriously what it could mean? I replied, that it was evidently to be our food, and that they thought straw for Englishmen a good substitute for bread!! This was most sorry fare, after our twelve leagues' journey, and little calculated to strengthen us for our forced and fatiguing march back into the interior of the country. However, complaint would only have subjected us to ridicule or insult, and without a murmur we drank our water, and reposed upon our straw. We had passed many days when the straw would have been a luxury to us, and many nights and days when we would have given a stream of gold for the draught of water.

This day's excursion had afforded us a view of that formidable flotilla which had so frequently threatened to hurl destruction upon

our little island; but with what different emotions did we catch the view of the white cliffs of Dover, and behold an English frigate and lugger blockading the French port. The sight of our country, and of the triumphant flag of our glorious profession—the navy of England —filled us with desires that were not to be realized, and with hopes in which it was tantalizing and vain to indulge. All consciousness, however, of our present fate was forgotten for a moment, and the tumult of my feelings was indescribable. Awakened to a sense of my real situation, I was a little relieved by a feeling of contempt at the dismantled and decaying flotilla, and by reflecting that had France had the folly to build a thousand times as many flat-bottomed boats as I then beheld, she never could have made any impression on that happy country which has defeated her for ages, and which to this day continues to strike terror into her enemies, and to inspire confidence in, and afford security to, her friends.

However, neither sentiment, reflection, nor visions of glory, can be a substitute for food, and the keenness of our appetites soon taught us the absolute necessity of becoming acquainted with our *good host.* We began to supplicate for relief through the iron bars; and our experience of the French character had taught us the good policy of accompanying each supplication with an assurance that we would pay not only liberally, but even any thing he might demand, for whatever we might be supplied with. At length, this man of iron bars and gratings thought proper to pay us a visit. He promised to afford us relief, and we soon got supplied tolerably well with food, and had two mattrasses brought us —we still keeping our promise to pay whatever was required. It appeared that this fellow was a great acquisition to Buonaparte's government: he had been originally a convict sentenced to perpetual imprisonment in chains; he therefore resided in a gaol, and wore small

silver chains round his wrists and ankles, and thus literally conformed to his sentence, whilst he was placed in a situation under government. This gaol, similar to all the others that I have seen in France, was full of deserters from the army, who were very cruelly used.

On Monday, the 21st, we were conducted to the captain of *gens d'armes* to undergo another examination; and he behaved very like a gentleman. We were interrogated separately. He said, that our attempt to gain our liberty was very laudable; he felt for our misfortunes, and assured me he would return me my letters if he possibly could; but added, that I might get them from General Wirion, at Verdun, to whom he was then forwarding them. Our march back was to commence the next morning; he exhorted us to have fortitude and patience, and dwelt very much on the cruelty of not having an exchange of prisoners between the two countries. We returned him many thanks for his goodness, and were escorted

back to our prison, where we made every necessary arrangement, within our power, for the next day. This was a task neither difficult nor long, for whatever were our necessities or wishes, our luggage or apparel, or the means of procuring either, were not calculated to cause us much embarrassment.

The next morning, Tuesday 22nd, we were called betimes by the guard, and in a few minutes were once more *en route.* The day was excessively wet and the roads heavy, which prevented the guards from chaining us, more especially as we had a very long march to Montreuil, which was twelve or thirteen leagues distant. About five in the afternoon we were placed in the common gaol of Montreuil, which we found a tolerably comfortable prison; but the gaoler and his wife imposed upon us in a shameful manner. They told us, that a Mr. Kemp, an Englishman, resided at the mayor's, and was considered a prisoner on his parole. We sent him a note, which he answered, by

declaring, "he would willingly come and see us, but he was afraid of compromising his own safety or indulgences;" — I leave the reader to imagine what opinion this reply gave us of our countryman. Here we remained several days, waiting, for what they styled, *correspondance.** As our guard had received orders to transport us from brigade to brigade, that we might experience the comforts of every dungeon between Estaples and Verdun, and also form acquaintances in them, we did not despair, even then, of being able to escape on our return, as we frequently contrived to slip our hands out of the handcuffs and chains, without being noticed; but we never found a cover or a convenient place to run to when these occasions offered themselves.

Our route was through Hesdin, and St. Pol,

* The *gens d'armes* in France are formed into brigades throughout the different departments; and they term the days for transporting prisoners from one brigade to the other, *Les jours de correspondance*, which days occur seldom when they have but few prisoners.

to Arras, where we saw several of our countrymen, who were not so extremely cautious as Mr. Kemp, although we were conducted through the main street, loaded with chains. The gaoler here behaved with kindness and civility to us, and (with the exception of one) was the most humane man in that situation I ever knew.*

The commandant was also extremely civil,

* And in dire necessity of his humanity were we all at this moment; but more especially myself, for so completely knocked up was I from excessive fatigue and exhaustion, by the length of this day's journey in chains, that I found my head quite dizzy, and had actually swooned and fallen against the prison walls before the gaoler could conduct me to my cell.

Some genteel young men of the town, to whom Tuthill and Essel had contrived, in passing to the gaol, by signs, to make known that they were freemasons, obtained permission for both to accompany them, for the night, to their houses, where they were most hospitably entertained; whilst Ashworth and I were left upon straw and scanty prison fare in the dungeon. This circumstance determined us to be made masons whenever an opportunity offered; and which subsequently took place, with respect to myself, at the Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields; for I consider it a solemn, moral, and useful institution, and that it is impossible for a conscientious freemason so be otherwise than a worthy member of society.

and allowed us, at our own request, a chaise, with an escort of two *gens d'armes*, whose names were Potdevin and Pasdevie, to Cambray. Having passed through Bapaume, we called at our old friend's, the baker's, where Mr. Essel supposed he had lost his money. He and his children were severally examined; but we could not discover the smallest trace that might lead us to suppose he had taken it: and I must confess I believed the baker to be innocent. At Cambray, we dismissed, or rather, the Arras escort quitted us; and we were conducted to Château Cambressi, where we were put into a most horrible dungeon under ground, nor could any thing in our power have any effect on the flint-hearted keeper of it. We fortunately remained but twenty-four hours at this place; thence we were conducted to Landreci, of which I have already made mention, as we were retracing our steps on precisely the same route through which I had been conducted from Brest to Givet, and not very wide off our recent

fly-by-night journey. However, my situation was now very different from what it had then been; for if I lately had swampy beds, an empty stomach, and circuitous routes and dodges, with an anxious mind, I was cheered by hope, and my pride was not mortified nor my body encumbered with fetters, chains and handcuffs. At Landreci, we were permitted to stop and get a breakfast. Our landlady here shed tears at seeing us handcuffed in so cruel a manner; yet, in spite of all remonstrances and entreaties, and notwithstanding the obvious inutility of this caution or harshness, our guards would not unshackle a single wrist during the whole time, and the people of the house were literally obliged to feed us.

At about five o'clock, on the 29th, we arrived at Avesnes, and were very rudely thrust into the gaol, and placed amongst the worst and lowest class of criminals that it contained. This, we were informed, was by the special order of General Wirion, who, it appeared, had

sent an express to all stages on our route, desiring that we should be treated as severely and as indignantly as possible. Our guard seemed to be by no means lax in discipline, for they fulfilled their instructions both to their spirit and letter. A report, moreover, was current at this place, that we were English spies, about to be shot for having been hired to inspect the naval armaments along the French coast. This idea certainly did not procure us the sympathies of the populace, nor did it seem to soften the tempers of our conductors; and all assurances to the contrary on our part, were rendered abortive by the fact of our being so heavily manacled, shackled, and loaded with chains. The conclusions from these symbols of guilt were, that if we were not spies we were something even worse; and we found the truth of the philosophical argument, that it is as impossible to oppose truth to prejudice, as it is to stop the ocean with a bulrush. Spies we were deemed; and this, though it

practically caused an inconvenient prepossession or prejudice against us, we could take even in a ludicrous sense; but what were our disgust and horror when we found that, being treated as spies, we were thrust into a horrible dungeon with a wretch that was condemned to perpetual imprisonment for having murdered and mutilated both his father and mother! I shuddered every time I beheld this monster, and could not bear his gaze upon me. I was told that the wretch had cut both of his parents into quarters, and had buried them in a pit. Never shall I forget the joy we all felt when, at day-break, we were taken from this horrible society. My mind had been astounded and my feelings overcome, even to a confusion of ideas; but when the pure air of morning and the sight of heaven revived me, I expressed my astonishment that crimes so heinous should not receive the punishment of death; and then it was, and not till then, that the solution was made clear to me — the unhappy man, upon his trial, had

been declared a lunatic. I reflected that, as a lunatic, he ought not to be subject to so cruel a confinement. From all I had seen of French gaols, I entertained a very low idea of the prison discipline, economy, and management of France; but the horrors of that night can never be effaced from my mind.

It was about five o'clock, on the 30th of September, that we were halted at the town of Hirson. I have already stated that I had passed through this town or village, as a prisoner, in common with the crew of the Hussar, when on our route from Brest to Givet. We were then billeted on the inhabitants, for the town is without a gaol. The recollection of this was highly inspiring to the whole of us, and we all anticipated that we should enjoy a pleasant night in good quarters. Our calculations, however, were miserably deceptive, for though this little place had not a gaol to contain the entire, or even part of the crew of His Majesty's frigate Hussar, it possessed a little damp, subterranean

cell or dungeon, just capable of containing four fugitive officers from Verdun, under suspicion of being spies. Whilst I and my companions were congratulating ourselves upon being beyond the power of our enemies and above their malice, and whilst I was saying, "they must, whether they wish it or not, let us go to the inn, and we can enjoy ourselves if we pay for their expenses," our halcyon expectations were dissipated, for we were thrust into this *cachot*, or dungeon, and a little straw being contemptuously thrown upon us, the heavy door was closed, and we were left to the choice of meditation or slumber. We preferred the latter, but vexation made us irritable; when luckily a brigadier of the *gens d'armerie*, who, with two *gens d'armes*, constituted the police of the village, shewed his face at the little hole in the door of the dungeon, and informed us that the gaoler's wife would procure us some sort of refreshment, provided we would pay her, and pay her in advance. This we not only agreed

to immediately, but we found our hearts bounding at the intelligence, and we most humbly and gratefully thanked this brigadier for his excessive goodness and condescension. There is an old French proverb, "*Que les Anglois ne donnent rien pour rien*;" and I might say in reverse, that the French are disposed to give nothing and to exact a great deal in return. We were soon informed that there was a kind of repast prepared for us, and that we should have permission to go out into the gaoler's house during the few minutes necessary to refresh ourselves. This intelligence threw us into great confusion, as we had been unaccustomed to such an indulgence, and, in consequence, had neglected to conceal in some secret hole a number of small articles, such as files and gimlets, which we fortunately had hitherto kept in our possession: the moment they were about to open our door, one preferred keeping what tools he had about him, another slipped his in amongst the straw, and in this perplexed state

the dungeon was opened and we were ordered out. At this instant, I flung from me, over a high garden wall, two small files, which I had concealed in my hand when the dungeon door was opened. I protest I thought the things left in the straw were best secured, as the place was excessively dark. We were now seated at table with some soup and *bouilli*, in great consternation, surrounded by the *gens d'armes* and gaoler. In a few minutes the latter procured a candle and lanthorn, and informed the brigadier he was ready to attend him. He accordingly rose, and they proceeded to the miserable abode we had just quitted. An opinion of our feelings at that moment can only be formed by those unfortunate people who have experienced similar sufferings and anxiety. I can only say, that our relish for the soup was not very great; we were well assured that every thing left in the straw would inevitably be discovered, which most certainly would lead to a general search of our persons.

I felt particularly concerned on account of a *certain article*, which I kept upon me contrary to the general wish. The brigadier's generosity was now sufficiently accounted for: he and his companion returned; and, as we expected, they had found every single tool, together with the stock of a double-barrelled pistol—of which I had given charge to Essel, keeping the barrels in my own possession, and another of the same description, with its barrels also (the *article* above alluded to), — they made very diligent search for the barrels of Essel's pistol-stock, but without effect. We assured them that we threw the barrels away prior to our quitting Verdun; and that we had taken the stock and lock to use occasionally instead of a tinder-box, which we had no possibility of providing. They began to search us now separately: a few things were found upon my comrades, but, fortunately for me, they did not discover my pistol upon my person, which was more complete than that which they had found, nor the barrels belonging to Essel's pistol-

stock, nor, in fact, any thing whatever. Poor Ashworth was less fortunate, for out of the seams of his great-coat they took two files. They next cut open every covered button, thinking one or all of them might contain some coin; but in this, I have no doubt, they were most mortified and chagrined to be mistaken. The brigadier could hardly convince himself that my walking-stick, which I purchased after leaving Boulogne, did not conceal a sword or dagger. He kept twisting it about, and tugging at it, all in vain, and yet so suspicious was he, that he chose to keep it for the night. We were reconducted to our den in a state of feeling which can scarcely be conceived. After the door was closed upon us, and our cunning gaoler had departed, each of my friends congratulated me upon my success in having concealed my pistol—the second substitute for the tinder-box — and the barrels of Essel's stock. In a few minutes we endeavoured to take what repose we could.

Awaking about midnight, I began to deliberate upon the consequence of having so dangerous a tinder-box about me, with all its necessary materials, or ammunition; and having found what I thought was a convenient place, a hole in the dungeon wall, I deposited the barrels of Essel's pistol therein, keeping about me still my own complete. The night went off without further disturbance.

At day-light, we were again put *en route* — chained, handcuffed, and closely, even maliciously, watched. The day was very rainy, the roads very bad and heavy; our march was long and fatiguing; and I cannot say that our minds were in the best possible state to cheer us through our sufferings. So severely and securely were we kept, that when one of my companions claimed the necessity of being released from the chains that bound us all together, one of the guard pinioned him with a strong cord—which such escort always carry—and which he held firmly in his hand.

It was on the 1st of October, about six in the evening, that we arrived at Maubertfontaine. Never were poor prisoners in a more miserable plight. We were saturated with rain, and covered with mud. We found that a new dungeon had been built in this village, and into it we were rudely thrust. What the old dungeon might have been, I do not know, but our *domicile* proved to me that the French could not have made much progress in the art of constructing dungeons. It was a wretched place. A boy, of about ten years old, had been confined in it for six or seven days; he belonged to the neighbouring town of Lille, and was imprisoned for having strolled from home without a passport. The poor little fellow informed us that his food had been nothing but black bread and water; and he stated, not much to my satisfaction, that our arrival had been expected for two or three days, and that we were to be searched most strictly. This boy was of the greatest service to me—and, with his assistance,

I contrived to conceal my double-barrelled pistol, or, as I termed it, my tinder-box. I unscrewed the barrels, and thrusting them into the fingers of my gloves, I kept the glove on, with the fingers bent towards the wrist, so that the pistol barrels were mistaken for my fingers straight out. The boy helped me to conceal the stock, just as the guard entered to search us. We had nothing else about us now, except our money, which had hitherto been respected, and a small gold watch which I wore, and which they fortunately did not discover. I purchased this watch at Verdun, and wear it even to the present day. We were searched with great strictness and severity; and such were the feelings against us, that the guard deprived us of all our money, and, upon our remonstrating, they replied that they would pay out of it all our expenses to Verdun, and account for the balance to General Wirion, at that *dépôt*. The reader may easily imagine with what sort of good faith the account was kept, and the amount

that remained to be paid to the General. However, this night the guard provided for us, out of our money, what they called a supper; and they procured for us some straw and blankets, which were our only beds. The poor French boy felt himself perfectly happy in having, as he termed it, "something good" to eat. Nothing is positive, all is relative or comparative in this life, and our wretched fare was more than Oriental luxury to a boy that had been so long shut up in a dungeon, without tasting any thing but water and black bread,—and not much of that miserable fare. We gave the poor little fellow an ample share of every thing that was brought to us; and, if he felt the luxury of the unexpected repast, we likewise felt "the greater luxury of doing good." The guards gaped and stared at the unusual scene; and, after muttering their *parbleus* and *sacrés*, they shrugged up their shoulders, and expressed their astonishment at our generosity. I only wished that generosity was contagious, and that our rapacious, stone-

hearted temporary keepers might imbibe our feelings. In the pathology of such moral disorders, however, the very reverse seemed to be the case, for one of the guard began suddenly to declaim against the English nation, with a vehemence, and gestures that were furious. He wished our country at the bottom of the sea; and declared, suiting actions to the words, that, if he had his will, he would guillotine every English prisoner in France, without distinction of rank, age, or sex. He became almost frantic, and exclaimed that he never could desire better employment nor enjoy greater happiness than in beheading every Englishman in the country: and he exhausted his breath and his vocabulary in this *humane* tirade. Chastisement was impossible, and resentment would have been ridiculous; so, as the French Emperor had not delegated such extensive authorities to such a worthy man, and as we could not be handed over to his tender mercies, I merely replied to the valour of his tongue, by a few contemptuous sneers, which

ludicrously added to the fury of the sanguinary monster, and seemed to drive him mad.

The excessive rage that he had put himself into so suddenly, induced me to avail myself of the first opportunity of inquiring, of one of his less ferocious comrades, what was the cause of all his inveteracy and rancour, and I was informed that he had been only two days liberated from Mezières gaol, in which he had been confined two months by the sentence of a court-martial, for allowing two English prisoners of war to escape—the court coming to the conclusion that he had been bribed.

The guard visited us every hour during the night; notwithstanding which, I contrived to find an opportunity of getting rid of all the materials of my dangerous tinder-box, excepting the barrels.

At daybreak, 2d October, we were handcuffed and chained to a cart, the roads having become too heavy to admit of our proceeding on foot; and here I got rid of the barrels, by

wrapping a little straw round each, and dropping them through the cart in the mud.

In the evening we arrived at Mezières gaol, and were put into the yard, after being strictly searched; nor could we procure even a dungeon, until we had agreed to pay a most exorbitant price which the gaoler charged for some refreshments that he had procured for us. He very laconically observed, "I know the *gens d'armes* have plenty of money, which they took from you. You may as well let me have part, as let *them* have all. You will not stand in need of any in a few days;" thus intimating that we were to be shot as spies, which was the general opinion every where. The spirit of extortion and system of plunder which at this time were indulged in by all the *employés* of the French government, spoke little for the national character, or for the *régime* that had been erected on the ruins of the old monarchy.

Our treatment was pretty nearly the same throughout all the way unto Verdun, where we

arrived at the latter end of October. I was then separated from my companions, being considered as the *chef du complot,* and was thrown into a miserable dungeon, in which was another prisoner, supposed to have been a spy, and who expected to be brought to trial in a few days, and with no great confidence of being tried with a superfluous regard to justice or mercy.

My being thus so suddenly dragged from my brothers in adversity, afflicted me more than any penal sentence that my judges could pass. The universal impression that we were to be shot, with which our ears had been dinned at every resting-place upon the road, seemed confirmed by the companion with whom they placed me in this dungeon. I was certain that, if only one of the party was to suffer death, that victim would be myself—not only because it is the custom in France to infer that the oldest of a party or gang is the ringleader, or *chef du complot,* but my conscience told me that I had really been the chief instigator to

all that we had done. I made my mind up to bear the execution with a fortitude and dignity that should not disgrace the naval service or national character of my country: I trusted in God that my death would satiate French vengeance, and that my brave companions would be allowed to escape: and finally, in the perfect resignation which I felt to my approaching fate, I was consoled by my conscience telling me that I had committed no crime that merited so sanguinary and ignominious a punishment. I laid my hand upon my heart, and felt that I had done nothing to tarnish the honour of a naval officer and a gentleman.

I passed, as it may be supposed, a most unpleasant night. My fellow-prisoner was very inquisitive, and anxious to know what I had been guilty of, that I should be put into the dungeon reserved for capital criminals. I gratified him in some measure, but was not in a communicative mood.

At daybreak, a guard came to conduct me

to the place of examination. Here I found Lieutenant Demangeoit, of the *gens d'armerie*, a scrivener, and Mr. Galliers, interpreter. This Lieutenant Demangeoit was afterwards dismissed from the Emperor's service. My examination continued two or three hours; every question and answer was noted down, and as much form and solemnity as possible were given to the proceedings. I was minutely cross-examined with respect to the pistol-stock, and was sifted over and over again, with both earnestness and cunning, as to where I had been on the days Buonaparte had passed through Verdun. I was interrogated as to what company I had been in, with whom I had breakfasted; and numberless other questions were put to me, without my being able to form the slightest idea of what they suspected, or at what object they were aiming. However, it was clear that I was suspected of some offence in relation to the Emperor, and it was certain that there was a determination, if possible, to

implicate me in it. Our companion, Essel, had on that morning, he now informed us, given a public breakfast to several of his friends at his lodgings, which happened to be situated immediately in the thoroughfare, or most public part, of the town, *La Place St. Croix*, and close to the windows of which Napoleon and suite must of necessity have passed. Of this circumstance I was ignorant, consequently had no invitation, which at this moment, for me, proved a fortunate event, and evidently explained the cause of the above alluded to strict and scrutinising examination.

M. le Lieutenant Demangeoit appeared also particularly anxious to ascertain whether my pistols had been purchased previous or subsequent to the breakfast, on the day of Buonaparte passing through Verdun. This was evidently done with the intention of, if possible, fixing upon us, but more especially upon me, to whom the articles in question belonged, the atrocious and abominable stigma of a conspiracy and premeditated

design to assassinate their Emperor: for whom, however formidable my dislike might have been to the *chief* of the avowed foes of my country, I entertained not the slightest feeling of personal vindictive animosity. My letters were shewn to me; but I was informed that they would be transmitted to Paris, for the special inspection of the minister at war, and the ministers of police and the interior. I had never suspected that I had been a person of sufficient importance to occasion all this trouble to the Emperor's cabinet ministers. They very much wanted to be informed by whom we had been supplied with ropes, and who had assisted us in descending the ramparts. I replied, "that, by degrees, we had procured sufficient rope for the purpose of horse-collars, and of course *twice* the length that would have been necessary had we had a friend to assist us in descending, by holding it fast; but we had to place the *bight* over a rock, which I knew stood near the place, and then went down by the double part: after which, we

hauled it to us, cut it to pieces, and threw it into the Meuse."

I went through all this raking and cross-fire of examination with patience and humility; but, the ordeal being over, I began to remonstrate at the unnecessary cruelty of being separated from my companions. At last, it was decided that I should be conducted to their prison, *La Tour d'Angoulême,* they having been removed from it to the place of examination. We were not allowed to see each other until the whole examination was over; but, in passing the guard-room in which they were locked up, I heard their voices, and vociferated to them, "Mind you stick to the old text:" a hint they very well understood. This exasperated the guard, who insisted upon knowing what I had said; but I simply replied, "That I had only said that I was very hungry, and wanted my breakfast:" with which he seemed perfectly satisfied. I need not describe the joy we all felt upon being once more together.

We amused ourselves the whole night in talking over the different questions that had been put to each of us, for it had long been our practice to suggest every possible question to which we might be probably exposed, in the event of our being captured; and to agree upon the answers we should make, in order that neither equivocation nor inconsistencies might undo us. The gaoler (Monsieur Percival) supplied us, out of our own funds, with the nourishment that was permitted by the laws of prison discipline. Fire and candle were prohibited.

Some days had elapsed, when we were again conducted to be examined separately. I was the first called into court. The lieutenant (Demangeoit) informed me that there had been certain questions transmitted from the minister at Paris to be put to me, and to which it would be to my interest to give candid answers. In the first place, he was certain that we never could have kept a direct course through the long and

difficult route from Verdun to Estaples without guides, especially as it appeared that we had had neither chart nor compass. We had luckily destroyed the compass, and no chart had been found upon us, with the exception of the maps of the departments at Estaples, so I coolly replied, "That English sailors could always steer with sufficient correctness by the stars; and that, when those celestial objects were visible, they were never at a loss."

When this question was disposed of, the court wished to be informed, "Whether I knew any thing of the coast of France, and whether I had ever been stationed off it?" It struck me that the shipwreck of the Hussar was a pretty clear proof that there was one part of the coast, at least, of which it would appear we had but an imperfect knowledge; but, smiling at the question, I replied, "That every naval officer of England was by far better acquainted with the French coast than even with his own." I mollified this allusion to our blockading every port

of France, and triumphantly sailing round her coasts, by adding, " That we could hardly go up and down Channel without acquiring a knowledge of the northern coast of France;" and at length I left no doubt on their minds with respect to our local knowledge of it. The questions were the same to all the rest, and we were then again reconducted to our prison.

In a week we were ordered to prepare ourselves for a march to the fortress of Bitche, in Lorrain, a wretched place, well known to many of our unhappy countrymen; a place, in the dreadful caverns of which many a valuable British subject had terminated his existence in all the agony that illness, despondency, and ill-usage, could create. Here we were to experience what the poet meant by " the noxious vapours of a dungeon;" and to become acquainted with what Lord Byron styles

——" The thing that crawls
Most noxious on the dungeon walls."

This was my transition from the expected fate

of being shot. And here, in some wretched *souterrain*, we were to remain during the war; nay, they even asserted that it was Buonaparte's own decree. Lieutenant Pridham, 1st of the late frigate, Hussar, a worthy and humane officer, by some means obtained permission to visit us before our march: he corroborated the information, and gave us General Wirion for his author. He expressed great sorrow for our hard fortunes, and justly observed, "That death was preferable to such a sentence." We were resolved to make another effort at all risks, and, if possible, to regain our liberty — cash alone was wanting. I, however, procured a small supply through the interposition of a worthy countryman, notwithstanding the strict guard that was kept over us. My Samaritan, or friend in need, was the Rev. C. Launcelot Lee (a *détenu*), Fellow of New College, Oxford, from whom I had at all times received great kindness. He contrived now to assist me in my extreme distress by giving the money to Mr. Galliers, another worthy English-

man, who had acted as our interpreter. The object was effected dexterously: for Mr. Galliers in taking leave, at the moment of our setting out for Bitche, when surrounded by the *gens d'armes*, cordially gave me his hand to shake, and pressed the precious treasure into mine. I was obliged to keep this act of generosity a profound secret: for, had it been discovered, it would have been of serious consequences to my two friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our Departure from Verdun for Bitche, the Bastile of the Condemned — A Mounted Guard — Thoughts of an Escape — Calculations upon a Chase in a Wood between Horse Soldiers and Prisoners on Foot — Chances of Escape — Attempt resolved upon — Signal given — Flight from the Prison Caravan to the Wood — French Pursuit — A Prisoner Recaptured — *Sauve qui Peut* — My Escape from the Wood into another — My Companions, I fear, less fortunate — The whole Country alarmed, and the Peasantry in pursuit — An Islet in a River, well wooded — My Concealment — A swampy Bed and a stormy Sky, with a Torrent of Rain, for a Canopy — A pitiable Condition, and a prospective Flight of nearly 800 Miles — The Misery of a fruitless Search for lost Companions — Feeding on Haws, and herding with Quadrupeds and Vermin — A Hut discovered — Hunger compels me to enter — Extreme Danger of Seizure — A Compromise, a Bribe, Female Advocacy, and an Escape — On the Road to the Rhine — Suspicious Guides and serious Alarms — Hiding Property — A Preparation to sell Life dearly — A narrow Escape — Living on Cabbage-Stalks and raw Turnips — Bad Feet and worse Health — A lonely House near a Wood — A Blazing Hearth seen through the Windows, and Torrents of Rain felt outside

—Strong Temptations to Enter—A brutal Host, extreme Danger, and a narrow Escape—Bad Specimens of Human Nature — An awkward Dilemma and a painful Sacrifice for want of Change — The Handkerchief and the Glass of Brandy, or *Snique.*

On the morning of our departure, we were joined by eight culprits at twilight, and were placed in a large waggon, under a very strong escort of *gens d'armerie,* with a brigadier to command it. We were confined the first night in a most miserable dungeon, in a village called Mars-la-Tour. It was so very small, and there were so many of us, that we could scarcely breathe. Our allowance of straw, *a pound and a half each,* was given us to lie on: this straw was so short, that it had exactly the appearance of so many bundles of toothpicks. The following night we were lodged in Metz* gaol. We remained here several days. At last an order came for half our number to proceed towards our destination:

* An ancient large town, situated on the confluence of the rivers Moselle and Seille. It is remarkable for the goodness of its sweetmeats.

two others, with us four, were accordingly commanded to get ready. We were now in the hope of having another chance of getting out of the clutches of our keepers, but were much mistaken; our guard watched us closely, and we were so well secured with handcuffs and with chains, that it was impossible to attempt it; we were, therefore, safely lodged in Sarre Louis* gaol. This is a *dépôt* for captured seamen, and one of punishment for officers who may transgress prison rules; but it is many degrees superior to Bitche. Several of our countrymen obtained permission to see us; and from one (Mr. Brown, master of H. M. gun-brig, Mallard, lately wrecked on the coast) I received a small map of Germany, torn out of an old book of geography, which I carefully stitched in the lining of my waistcoat. We were now joined by those left in Metz prison, and were soon

* Since Buonaparte's reign, called Sarrelibre. It is a small strong town in Lorraine, fortified after the manner of Vauban, situated on the river Sarre, thirty-two miles north-east of Metz.

again on the march towards our destined habitation: the same precautions were taken for securing us, and but little or no hopes were left of our escaping. We arrived at Sarreguemine, only six or seven leagues from Bitche, and were secured, as usual, in the gaol. The next day, at about four in the afternoon, we expected to arrive at our horrible abode. In the morning our guards came with a large waggon, in which we were placed, and, to my great astonishment and delight, we were not chained. I considered this as a most wonderful circumstance, and as a favourable opportunity of escape that ought to be embraced, particularly as there could be no hopes of any other chance; indeed, it appeared an interposition of Divine Providence in our favour. I communicated my intentions to my companions; and, after we had got out of the town, we descended from our waggon, observing to the guards that we preferred walking a little. Mr. Essel remained in the waggon. Messrs. Ashworth, and Tuthill, and Baker, of the merchant service, with myself, were walking

a-head of the waggon. We had not got more than two or three miles, when I discovered a wood at about one hundred and fifty yards from the road: our guards were about fifty yards behind us, and were on horseback. In so unequal a chase, a chase between man and horse, we might be overtaken in our run to the wood; but, if we could once reach that point, we were safe: for although there were no leaves on the trees, we were certain that our mounted guards could not pursue us without a great deal of difficulty, owing to the branches and underwood; and, should they dismount, accoutred as they were, and with their heavy boots, we knew that we could outrun them with the greatest ease. We might have reflected that a ball from a horse-pistol or carbine could fly faster than a man or horse could run; but our stake was so high, that we would still have been willing to take the chance of the Frenchmen being bad shots.

At length, the most interesting and anxious moment arrived. We were on the spot where the attempt could be made better than at any

Escape of the Author and his Companions.

London, Published by Henry Colburn, Gt Marlborough St 1839.

other. I gave my friends the signal,—a loud cheer. Away we ran: the startled guards dug their spurs into their horses, and gallopped at our heels with the utmost speed. The ground was very heavy, a ploughed field being the space between the road and wood. Poor Baker fell, and was instantly seized and conducted back to the waggon with a sabre over him, and a pistol ready to do its office, should he attempt again to escape. We were more fortunate. We got into the wood, dodged the *gens d'armes* through brier, brake, and entanglement. I and my companions crossed each other several times, out of breath, and I could barely cry to them to keep behind trees, and avoid pistol-shots; for the guards were leaping, plunging, and riding in all directions, roaring out, in the greatest rage, the words, "*Arretez, coquins!*" &c.—(*Stop, villains!*) These not very agreeable epithets, in hoarse French, assailed our ears from every point. At length, my pursuers gave up the chase of me to follow my companions; and, fortunately, finding

a good tree between me and the foe, I sat down to catch my breath, and consider what I should do. It had been, and still might be, "neck or nothing with me." I observed the guards hotly pursuing my companions. I could render them no assistance; and, with all of us, it was a desperate case of "*Sauve qui peut!*" The moment I lost sight of the *gens d'armes*, I bounded towards the side of the wood opposite to the direction they had taken, and I perceived an extensive plain, terminating, in one direction, in a wood, which seemed not much more than a mile off. Without any more deliberation, I darted into the plain; and, running at my utmost speed, I reached the wood in a few minutes, without seeing, or, as I flattered myself, being seen, by any body. The extent of the plain was about a mile; and, by the time I had reached the middle, I was so out of breath, that I was obliged to stop a few minutes, and I therefore fell flat on my face, with my mouth open, and close to the earth; and the relief was

astonishing. I laid close to the ground, that I might not be discovered. However, another run brought me to the wood. Having thus far so providentially escaped, I began to consider what steps I had better take next; and, after resting a few minutes again to recover my exhausted strength, I determined on quitting this wood, and at the extremity opposite to that at which I calculated my pursuers might be looking out for me, as I thought they would naturally take that direction, after a diligent search had convinced them that I was not in the wood into which we had first entered. Besides, I saw that the first wood was now entirely surrounded by the peasantry; for, it being Sunday, all had been idle, and men, women, and children caught the alarm, and hurried like wolves to the chase. The French government, at this time, gave a reward of fifty livres, or 2*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.*, to any person who should recapture a prisoner of war that had escaped from prison or from an escort, and this brought out such a prodigious concourse of eager

people, as to leave me but very little hope of remaining in safety in any place where it could be even suspected that a man might be concealed.

On quitting this wood, I conjectured that I was about three or four miles from the road from which I had at first escaped. Immense plains, stubble ground, meadows, fields fallow and ploughed, presented themselves to my view, with the river Sarre close to the southward of me, but extremely rapid, and no part of it fordable.

I now observed several people at a distance, running towards the first wood. My case appeared desperate; and, to avoid suspicion, I thought the best method would be to walk deliberately across those plains, taking a different direction from that of every other person in them, but without appearing to avoid any. I put a night-cap on, which I had in my pocket, instead of the beaver-cap I usually wore,—the night-cap being a common dress with the peasantry of Lorrain. I passed several of them at very short

distances, stopping frequently, and seeming to walk very carelessly. At length, I found myself in a small vale, through which ran two small rivulets, forming a little kind of island, that was covered with one hawthorn-bush, briers, &c., sufficiently large to conceal one man. This I considered admirably well calculated for a hiding-place; for as it was so excessively small and wet, I was of opinion nobody would even think of searching it. I entered it, and was so completely covered, as to be scarcely able to discern the part through which I had first pene-

trated. I found it in one sense very uncomfortable,—I mean with respect to the mud, wet, and dirt, that I was obliged to wallow in; but, otherwise, it was a perfect paradise to me: and all I regretted was not having my poor comrades somewhere near me; although I comforted myself in feeling assured that they must all have escaped, even those who did not run in the beginning, as they were left with only the waggoner, the guards having gone in pursuit of us. I was, indeed, some time afterwards informed, that not one of the remaining eight ever attempted to quit the waggoner, but were quietly conducted to Bitche; where, as the reader will find, I was again compelled to rejoin them.

This was Sunday, November 15, 1807, and I lay cold and quietly enough in my wet and muddy bed, anxiously wishing night to arrive, and dispel part of my apprehensions. I was obliged frequently to shift from one side to the other, the cold and moisture becoming extremely severe and distressing. In a short time I was

wet through in every part of my body, and found the cold intense; for when I lay down in the mud, I was in a profuse state of perspiration. It did not relieve my miseries to hear either the alarm-bells ringing in the adjacent villages, or the whistling, howling, and shouting of the peasantry I had just quitted; what was still worse, I was frequently startled by voices close to me.

But now the much desired moment of darkness drew near: the sun was descending; but, to my great discomfiture and mortification, with every appearance of bad weather. It already began to rain very hard, which obscured the moon, then about eight or nine days old. Reflecting on my present state, I found it truly pitiable. I had only the small old map I have already mentioned, to direct my course; and I was without compass, guide, clothes, meat, drink, or companion, and the dreary month of November was setting in with more than its usual inclemency. The nearest friendly town was Salsburg, in Austria, and that was between

seven and eight hundred miles distant. This was enough to chill the ardour, and paralyse the exertions, of the most dauntless; nevertheless, my having escaped from the grasp of tyrants, and become my own master, more than compensated, in my estimation, for a thousand hardships, sufferings, and dangers.

I cut a stick out of the very bush in which I had all day been concealed, and picked a number of haws off it, which I put into my pockets, occasionally swallowing them, stones and all.

About half-past seven, I ventured out, shook, cleaned, and washed the mud off my clothes, as well as I could, and recommending myself to a merciful Creator, by whose bountiful clemency I had been this day so miraculously protected, I proceeded with great caution towards the wood in which I had separated from my companions, for I supposed that they would keep in it, or likewise return there to meet me. It rained very hard, and every thing was profoundly silent.

I traversed the woods for three or four miles in different directions; but all to no purpose. Now and then I ventured to whistle, which was the signal formerly established amongst us, but all without success. I remained alone, dispirited, hungry, cold, fatigued, and drenched with rain. The moon and stars being entirely obscured, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather, prevented my knowing to a certainty what course to take. The risk was too great to venture on the high road; I knew this from sad experience: and yet I was so nearly perishing with cold and wet, that it was impossible to remain in my place of concealment. I therefore kept running and walking onward during the night, frequently impeded by the course of the Sarre, which confused me greatly. At length, being very much fatigued, from the commons, deserts, and fields which I had gone through, and finding a convenient wood, though destitute of leaves, I got into it, and concealed myself in a tolerably good part, a little before daylight. I never recollect feeling

or suffering so much from cold: it had rained incessantly all this day. I swallowed a few of my haws, and endeavoured to comfort myself by imagining that the ensuing night might be fine, and that I might possibly fall in with my comrades; which would, indeed, have been the greatest consolation. I also felicitated myself on not being much more than fifteen leagues from the Rhine; that having been the distance when I quitted my companions: admitting that I had been going in the opposite direction all night, I could not have increased the distance much.

The whole of this day (the 16th) I was surrounded by moles, rats, and other small animals, somewhat like squirrels: the rats often approached so near, as to lick my shoes. Their tricks and advances rather amused me, and abated, in some measure, the lowness and disquietude of my mind. At the close of the evening, a swineherd passed by, conducting his hogs near my hiding-place. I saw him very distinctly.

One of the pigs took flight exactly towards me: he sent his dog in pursuit of it; which, providentially, turned it back, otherwise it would have absolutely run over me. I need not observe how much I was alarmed, especially as I could not have been far from the place whence I had escaped.

About eight o'clock I quitted my retreat. The night was again very bad. It kept blowing and raining very hard, and it would be difficult to imagine weather more unpropitious to a traveller provided with all the conveniences and comforts of a journey; but what was it to a man in my destitute condition and desperate circumstances? I was again at a loss to know what direction to take: for never did darker and thicker clouds obscure the light of heaven. About nine o'clock, I discovered a small hut, and I imagined that I had an opportunity of endeavouring to procure a morsel of food of some kind. I reconnoitred it with a trembling earnestness, and at last most cautiously ap-

proached the door. The struggle between my eager desire to procure some sustenance, without which I must perish, and the dread of being arrested in the attempt, may be conceived, but cannot be described. After deliberating some length of time at the door, agitated by hopes and fears, and by every conflicting emotion, without being able to come to any final resolve: the want of sustenance, as I was sinking from hunger, preponderated over even the dread of my being again led to my dungeon; and, with a trembling hand, I at length knocked at the door. It was opened by a woman. I humbly asked for some bread in German, which is the language spoken by the peasantry of Lorrain. She made signs for me to enter, which I did.

There were three men and another woman in the house. An elderly man, who was the only one of the party that could speak French, instantly told me "he was certain that I was one of the English prisoners who had escaped from the guard on the preceding day." He added,

" That one of the guard had just quitted the hut: he had been in search of the fugitives all day, and had called on his way home to give the present company information." This was pleasing intelligence: what, I suppose, might be called an agreeable surprise. I did not dispute who or what I was. The fellow proceeded to dwell on the reward of *fifty livres*, which the government gave for arresting a prisoner of war. "*Fifty livres*," he added, "was an object to poor people like them." I perfectly understood his drift; and merely observed, "That although the government promised the reward, they were not certain when it might be paid." I afterwards appealed to his honour and feelings; and asked him, "What honest man, for so paltry a recompense or amount, would prevent a poor prisoner of war, who had been guilty of no crime whatever, from revisiting his wife, and every thing that was dear to him, after a close imprisonment for four or five years?" He explained all that I had said to the others; and I found that the women took

my views of the subject, and were advocates for me. Upon this, I addressed the old man again, and said, " As you appear to me to be very worthy, honest people, accept of this trifle amongst you;" and I gave him a *louis d'or*. I next presented the women with six livres, as a mark of my respect for them, and they received the money very graciously. I saw that matters now bore, or were beginning to bear, a favourable aspect, and I accordingly took the first favourable opportunity to assure them, how very sorry I was that I had not more money to give them. I at length begged them to supply me with a little bread, but they assured me that they had none baked. I next requested that they would shew me the nearest way to Bitche, as I had friends there who would supply me with a little cash, to enable me to proceed on my long journey. After a long discussion in German, during which I perfectly discovered their uneasiness at not having received more than thirty livres, the old man observed, " As there is but

one of them, it is of no great consequence; but if they all were here, it would have been well worth while." I could not help thinking to myself, that, if we had all been present, we should have been such an over-match for them, as to prevent their making the attempt, and I might have kept my money in my pocket. I again repeated my wish to be directed towards Bitche. I knew that there was a direct road from Bitche to the Rhine, and this was my reason for wishing to go that way. The women again pleaded in my favour, and at length the two young men got up and offered their services. I accepted the offer, and they equipped themselves, and announced that they were ready. I took a most joyful leave of the women and old man, and followed my guides, inexpressibly rejoiced at getting out of this danger; though I did not consider myself perfectly safe whilst I remained with these men.

My suspicions and alarm grew stronger and stronger, for they conducted me through very

narrow, intricate ways, through deserted places, and over heaths and commons; and they generally kept behind me: and I observed they were always whispering together. I had, at the best, no great opinion of them; and these circumstances were so suspicious, that I feigned occasion to remain behind a little while; and this time I occupied in concealing my watch, money, and the small map, all of which had hitherto been in the pocket of my pantaloons. This being done, I advanced, assumed a light and satisfied air, but took good care not again to take the lead of them. The darkness and inclemency of the night, the melancholy state of my mind, my exhausted frame, with the awful aspect of the mountains and forests I passed through, together with the discordant screamings of the screech-owls—and here I believe there were wolves also—filled my very soul with horror. The white-thorn club was my only weapon. I grasped it with secret comfort, and was determined to use it, should I have occasion, to the

utmost of my strength. Yet, perhaps, my opinion of these fellows had been ill founded. About midnight they left me, on a pathway to the road to Bitche, and took their leave. I felt much pleased at so happy a deliverance, and continued in that direction until about three o'clock; when, supposing myself near enough to that unhappy mansion (Bitche), I directed my course (as I thought) towards the Rhine. Some time before daylight it ceased raining; the stars shewed themselves, and I had the mortification of discovering that I had been going diametrically opposite to my proper course. What added to my miserable situation, was the further discovery that there was neither wood nor any place in sight to cover me for the ensuing day.

In this unhappy dilemma I still kept advancing, being confident that I had passed no secure retreat. At length, some time after daylight, I discovered a very thin wood on the side of a hill, which I immediately betook myself to, and there I remained until night. Here I

managed to get a dry shave. My gold watch, hung upon a bush, was my only looking-glass; but the razor was a tolerably *good one*. There was a drizzling rain the whole of the day, and the cold was extreme. I did not feel hungry, but excessively weak. During the preceding night I had taken several draughts of water, which satisfied my appetite. The only annoyance I had this day was a man, who was cutting wood below me, in the valley. I could see every motion he made; but it was impossible he could see me, in consequence of my breaking small branches and sticking them close round me.

At night, about the usual time, I commenced my journey, and took the direction back, going over the ground which I had followed the preceding morning; and I confess, notwithstanding my disappointment, I felt some consolation in knowing I was at length in the right track. During the whole of this night, my escapes from being dashed to pieces, by repeated falls down precipices, which the darkness concealed, were

quite incredible. About eleven I felt very much harassed, from crossing fields, morasses, gullies, and ditches; and happening to hit the high road, I resolved to follow it for some time, especially as I thought it my direct way, but could not be certain, as the moon and stars were still obscured. I supposed it was too late for travellers to interrupt me. However, after quitting a wood on the side of the road, whence I had to crawl up a sort of gravel-pit to get on it, imagine my astonishment!—I had no sooner stepped on the road than I was challenged—"*Qui vive?*" ("Who goes there?") in an audible voice, by a *gens d'arme* on horseback. I need not point out how ready I was to quit the high-way at that moment; I shall only say, that I made but one jump down the gravel-pit, and crawled thence back into the wood; where I remained for some time to gather strength, being sadly exhausted. I then proceeded along the wood, without having any idea where I was going, the night still very dark, wet, and incle-

ment. The weather was very much against me, and added greatly to a despondency which fatigue and hunger had increased; I, however, was resolved to struggle against it to the last. I fortunately fell in with a cabbage-garden, close to a cottage near the wood, and ate plentifully, and I stowed a good supply in my pockets for the ensuing day. Afterwards I re-entered the wood, in which I remained all day. At night I recommenced my journey, still embarrassed, in consequence of the weather, to know which way to go. This was the most severe night, if possible, I had yet experienced; the roads, pathways, and fields, were deep and heavy from the constant rains; rivulets had become dangerous rivers, and I had to wade through several. I had an opportunity again this night of feasting upon cabbage-stalks, leaves, and turnips, and filled my pockets plentifully. At about eleven o'clock, whilst advancing along the skirts of a wood, I observed four men walking very fast, in a different direction to me. I immediately sup-

posed they were four of my comrades, and they, I thought, were going into Holland; which accounted (admitting I was going right) for the course they were taking. I stood up close to a tree and whistled an English tune, on hearing which they quickened their pace from me. I then whistled our usual signal, and they instantly ran away as fast as their legs could carry them. I felt very unhappy, for it still haunted my imagination that they were my old companions. I even regretted that I had not called to them, but the sequel will inform the reader into what a labyrinth I probably should have fallen had I done so.

My feet now began to blister and to get very sore; and I was likewise becoming emaciated and very weak — it being my fifth day of living upon cabbage-leaves, stalks, and raw turnips. In my first attempt or flight, our food used to be occasionally nuts, apples, and grapes, now turnips and cabbages were my only resource.

About half-past two in the morning, I per-

ceived a small lonely house on the side of the wood. My necessities induced me to imagine that I might approach it without danger, and endeavour to procure some refreshment. After so long a ramble, even allowing for the traverse I must have made, I thought I must still be a great distance from the place from which I had escaped. On these calculations and suppositions I was resolved to make the attempt, and accordingly approached the dwelling. I saw a light in the window, got close to the door, peeped through the keyhole and window alternately, and at last saw a woman spinning by a rousing fire. The effect was electrical. What could be more thrilling to a man in my deplorable state, than to behold the cleanly hearth, the blazing fire, and happy industry, amidst the comforts and simple ornaments of the cottage? Oh, how anxiously did I wish to be seated by that brilliant fire! Twice had I the knocker or latch of the door in my hand, and as many times did I let it go — so great and instinctive had become

my dread of approaching human habitations. My last *rencontre* had greatly heightened my terror, and not having plenty of money again to buy myself out of a difficulty, was another powerful reason for alarm. However, notwithstanding all this reasoning and all these accumulated terrors, the physical wants of drooping nature prevailed, and seizing the knocker a third time, my astonished ears heard its sound. The door was opened by a man, who surveyed me from top to toe. I was covered all over with mud, nor was there a thread about me that was not saturated with rain. He could clearly perceive from my miserable appearance and woful aspect, that I had been for a long time secluded from my fellow-creatures, and had been doomed to associate, or rather herd, with the animals that inhabit the caves and forests. What the tones of my voice might have been I do not know, but the screams of the screech-owls, and the howlings of wild animals, during my night wanderings, were the only voices I had heard for a long

time; and they had become so familiar to me, that, perhaps, my organs of speech began to assimilate with those animals. Be the case as it may, had Robinson Crusoe, his man Friday, Caliban, or Peter Wilkins, knocked at his door, he could not have been more astounded. Whilst the fellow remained with his eyes riveted upon me, I assured him in French that I was thirsty, and asked him if he would have the kindness to give me something to drink. He could not speak French, but he made me understand that he had nothing whatever to give me. I discovered a pail of water, and pointing to it with a supplicating gesture, the churl brought me a ladleful of it. I then took the liberty of sitting down by the fire, though the inhospitable boor or wife never asked me. I as little liked the appearance of the place as I did that of its brutal owner; and as it presented to my view not a single thing, except the fire, that could be of the slightest service to me, I resolved to take my departure. I asked him the road to Strasbourg,

and the reply was that it was close by. I was about to quit the fireside, when a tailor arrived to work for the family. He also began to survey me closely, and having examined me from head to foot, I heard him whisper to the man of the house, and clearly distinguished the words *Englander* and *Bitche*. In fact, the uncharitable varlet had revealed the truth, that I was an Englishman escaping from Bitche. He then addressed me, and asked if I were a person authorized to travel?—whether I had a passport?—with several other questions of the same tendency.

Exhausted as I was, I saw that boldness in this case was my only buckler; so turning fiercely upon him, I replied that he must be a very impudent fellow to take the liberty of asking such questions,—that I should not condescend to answer an inquisitive gossiping rascal of his description; and I wished to know by what authority he could presume to interrogate me in so unhandsome a manner. The fellow pretended to smile, but he had not ex-

pected a retort so vigorous, as I saw evidently that he was disconcerted, if not frightened. I next observed to the landlord, that the extreme inclemency of the weather alone had occasioned my stopping at his house, particularly as I had seen neither town, village, nor public-house, contiguous to it. I added, that as there were no hopes of the weather clearing up, I should continue my road to Strasbourg; which the fellow assured me was twelve leagues off, whilst Bitche was only three. At this information I was distressed and mortified to find what little progress I had made in so many days, or rather nights. The whole party sat down to breakfast without asking the weather-beaten way-bewildered stranger to partake of their meal; so he, of course, took his leave of these selfish and unfeeling specimens of human nature; and exchanging the blazing fire for the unpitying elements, he pursued his solitary journey, disgusted that aught so base as what he had witnessed could be found under the human form.

But I must confess, that previously to my going, I had persuaded the woman of the house to supply me with a small quantity of *snique* (inferior country brandy), and having taken it in water, I found I had not the two *sols* which she demanded in payment. I gave her, therefore, a Napoleon, or twenty franc piece, but which she could not change. As the Jezabel still insisted upon payment, and I had not the means, I was obliged to give the mercenary wretch a valuable muslin handkerchief which I wore round my neck, and which had been worked and marked by a most sincere and valued friend with her own hair. Had I had a supply of money at all sufficient for the journey before me, I would gladly have preferred sacrificing the Napoleon. When I reflected upon her who gave and her who took from me the handkerchief, human nature seemed to contain contrasts as great as that between the viper and the angel of light and purity.

CHAPTER IX.

An Inclement Season — A Retreat in a Cavern — Difficulties of climbing Rocks in the dark, and greater Difficulties of descending — Somnambulism — The Discovery of a Shepherd's Hut — A Traveller put out of a Wrong Road — Swimming in a Winter's Night — Passing through a Mill — A Suspicious Traveller may be an Honest Man — Ingenious and Unsuccessful Fiction — A Lorrain Cottage seen through a Fog — Dangers from over-kind People — Repugnance to be Introduced to a Mayor, or any other good Society — The Necessity of Decamping from Good Quarters, and the Convenience of a Night Concealment in a Hollow Willow — An Honest Fellow-traveller of Fugitive Reminiscences — An Ingenious Fiction — A Perspective of Strasbourg.

THE inauspicious month of November, 1807, seemed to take a malignant cognizance of my enterprizes, and to visit me with more than its usual severities. However, on the *coute qui coute*, or *à tout hasard* system, I was again on my journey.

To prevent suspicion, I walked boldly on the

road. It rained excessively heavy, and I was sure that nobody who had any possibility of remaining under cover would be in the way to interrupt me. After advancing a short distance, on turning back I observed my *friend*, the tailor, with all the rest, watching which way I went. I therefore continued the road, until I lost sight of the house, and proceeded, hungry and wet, but tolerably well pleased at getting so well off. I now discovered a high mountain with rocks and pines, contiguous to the road; and I imagined I might find a more hospitable retreat in some cavern amongst those rocks, than in the house which my fellow-creatures occupied. Not wishing to remain exposed any longer on the highway, I scrambled up, and reached the summit. There I found an excellent, dry cavern under an immense rock. I crept into it and shortly fell into a profound sleep; in which state I remained, until I was disturbed by the grunting of wild hogs that came to banish the unfortunate and forlorn usurper, who had so illegally taken

possession of their habitation. I found it quite dusk, and about the time I should recommence my journey. After looking at these animals, grateful for the benefits I had received in their cave, I descended and got on the Strasbourg road, and kept running with little intermission the whole of the night, notwithstanding the excruciating pain I felt from my blistered feet.

About midnight, having halted to listen if there were any noise or footsteps to be heard on the road, I plainly discovered, by the cracking of whips, that a coach or waggon was advancing. I therefore retired a few steps from the road side, and lay close down. It passed, and, as far as I dared to peep at it, appeared to be a *diligence*, or the heavy travelling coach. I then resumed my route; kept running on, and passed several villages, until a little before daylight, conjecturing that I could not be far from the Rhine. I secured my lodging in a wood for the ensuing day.

Looking about for the best shelter and ac-

commodation, I perceived a cavern under a rock far above me. It was apparently formed by the hand of nature and time; and the rock, from its stupendous summit, displayed an immense precipice, well calculated to inspire the feelings of awe and admiration which are derived from the view of beautiful and sublime scenery. But I was in no mood to contemplate scenery, or to enjoy either beauty or sublimity. My thoughts were all absorbed in procuring shelter from bitter cold, from piercing winds and drenching rain, and, from what was worse than all these, the hostile hand of unfeeling man.

I determined, if possible, to scale this alarming height, never reflecting on what experience ought to have taught me, that when a man is calculating upon climbing to a dangerous elevation, he ought to consider how he is to get down again — for descent is often by far more difficult than ascent. The *facilis descensus Averni* of the poet applies only to places underground.

It was still dark, and this added to my perils

and difficulties. In this exertion I climbed on my knees, clinging to roots, clumps of dwarf trees, or to tufts of the thick coarse herbage; and if a single hold had given way, I must have been dashed to pieces. Panting, and nearly exhausted, I at last reached the top; and recovering my breath, I refreshed myself with the few cabbage stumps which I had procured in passing the villages; and entering the cavern, I threw myself on the ground, and instantly fell into what may be almost called a stupor rather than a sleep.

My spirits were extremely agitated during the whole of the time I was in this lurking-place. I awoke frequently, talking quite loud, and naming the gentlemen that had been my former companions; holding conversation with them as if they were actually present. Some time after I had experienced a short and disturbed repose, I started up all of a sudden, and desired my companions to rise and renew their journey: when, on recovering from my delirium, and looking

round, to my inexpressible amazement I discovered that I was actually at the bottom of the precipice, and that it was quite daylight. This precipice was very steep, and, I repeat it, alarmingly dangerous, even to a man with all his senses collected, and in the open day; and how I came again to the bottom of it alive, I am utterly unable to explain. I consider it as one of the most providential and extraordinary events that was ever known—I do not recollect an instance of walking in my sleep prior to this. After collecting my scattered ideas, which was no easy task, I hastened into the wood again, for it rained very heavily, and prostrated myself in the most humble, devout, and, I trust, sincere manner, before the great Disposer of all events, offering up my most earnest and heartfelt thanks for the great mercies and protection so bountifully bestowed upon me on this most marvellous occasion. During this day I crossed several mountains covered with trees, and at length found a very comfortable cave full of nice dry leaves, on the declivity of

a hill, which appeared to be the retreat of some animal. From the continued chain of lofty, wild, and barren mountains that surrounded me, I had very serious apprehensions that this might be the lair of wolves, or of some wild beasts; but I entered it, and found it lofty enough to sit upright in. I took off my coat, squeezed out the water, and, after refreshing myself with my usual fare, I lay down on the earth, and covering myself with leaves, and my coat over all. I went to sleep, well sheltered from the wind and rain, that beat with great violence against the entrance of the cavern.

About dusk I was awakened by the chattering of a jay at the mouth of the cavern, and but for this I might have slept on until the return of the ferocious owner or occupier of the den. The image of this bird is now fresh in my recollection, and will remain so as long as I live. I crawled out of this, which proved to me so safe a retreat, shook myself, and put on my wet coat. It had every appearance of a fine night, with an

inclination to frost. I consoled myself with the calculation, that I could not be more than three leagues from Strasbourg. After descending the mountain, I discovered a peasant's hut in the vale; and, let the danger be what it might, I determined, at all hazards, to ascertain, at this place, what was really my distance from the Rhine. I accordingly entered, and found a young man, woman, and child, sitting round a fire. Unfortunately they could speak nothing but *patois* German, and I was about to retreat, vexed in the extreme that we were unintelligible to each other; when, just as I was leaving the hut, an old man met me at the door. He stared at me with his eyes full of wonder, and, as soon as he recovered his self-possession, he asked me if I were a Frenchman. "Yes," I replied, "and I have missed my way in crossing the mountains; and I will be obliged to you if you will put me *en route* to Strasbourg." The fellow was kind of heart and civil of manners. He put me on the right road, and gave me the names of all the

villages I should have to pass through; but my spirits sunk within me, when he concluded by saying, that I was only twelve leagues from Strasbourg. "Twelve leagues!" I exclaimed, with dismay; but I took my leave of this old man, and proceeded, heavy of heart, on my apparently interminable journey. I could not account for this great distance, except on the ground of my having been directed wrong by the former inhospitable wretches that had driven me from their fire-side.

My humble hosts on this occasion had nothing to give me to eat, and they really appeared sorry for it; but before my departure they offered me some brandy and water, for which I was grateful, got change for my Napoleon, and I paid them liberally.

After proceeding about two or three miles, I met two men on the road with fowling-pieces or muskets. They saluted me civilly, and, I am glad to say, passed on, without bestowing on me any inspection or observation. Never was contempt or disregard so welcome to me.

At this time my feet were so very much swollen and very sore, that I could not wear my shoes; but I kept my stockings on until the foot parts of them were worn out, and even then I found their legs of great service in frosty weather. So far from refreshing me, the brandy and water I had taken made me very ill.

I now repassed several villages, which I had gone by the preceding night; and this convinced me that I must have taken a circuit, instead of going directly onwards. About eleven, I recognised a village which I had passed through the night before, and here I supposed I had made the deviation, and turned to the left instead of to the right: not being quite certain, I stopped to consider a moment; when I saw a woman, of whom I asked the way; she had the kindness to direct me, and I then perceived that my mistake the night before had been exactly as I suspected. I thanked her, and, as I was leaving her, the door of a small public-house on the road-side opened. Out came a French military officer!—

he passed the woman, and I dreaded very much lest he should inquire who I was, and what I wanted with her; but he did not prove so inquisitive. He likewise passed me without speaking. I fortunately had to go in a different direction from him, and immediately made the best of my way.

The grateful idea of being at last in a fair way of succeeding and overcoming all difficulties, began now to be highly cherished. I found myself on an excellent road, got a supply of very fine turnips out of an adjoining garden, and discovered regular posts on the road-side. I kept running all night, with very little intermission, resolved, at all events, to get near the Rhine before morning. The road continued for about four leagues, through a wood. On leaving this wood, I was brought to a stand all of a sudden by the walls of a town, which, according to the names I had received from the old man, was Haguenau; but I had never supposed that the road led through it, or that it was walled in:

it was also surrounded by a river, which appeared an insurmountable barrier to my proceeding. I required much resolution (owing to the frost) to take to the water; however, there was no alternative, necessity has no law, so I stripped, and, fortunately, swam and waded through one branch of it. On the other branch I observed a mill, with the house built on an arch, so as to let the water flow under it. Upon a strict survey, I perceived, that if I could pass this branch, I should be able to make a circuit round the town, and to get clear off. I approached, saw the mill-door open, and the road on the opposite side. I was naked, ready to plunge in this stream as I had into the other, had necessity required it; but I retired to a shelter, put on my clothes, and, with a palpitating heart, I passed through the mill, without hearing any noise but that of the works. The passage seemed to me to be a thoroughfare for the people who brought their corn to be ground, if not for the population generally.

Thus easily did I surmount what only an hour ago I had deemed impracticable. I returned my devout thanks to Providence, and congratulated myself on this success. I now walked towards Strasbourg, with the cheering confidence that I was on the proper road. At about half-past three, I was a little startled by hearing a man cough at a short distance behind me. I did not quicken my pace; but, on the contrary, in order to avoid suspicion, I rather slackened it. He soon overtook me, saluted me civilly in very broken French, and expressed his surprise that I had been able to get out of town so early. This was a shrewd, and to me a very unpleasant observation.

I told my most unwelcome companion that I believed I was the first out of the town that morning. I pretended to be of opinion that it was past five o'clock, and said that I believed it was usual to open the gates of the town about that hour. He rejoined, "That it was more likely to be nearer three than five;" and added,

" that he wondered to see me barefooted." I began to dislike the style of conversation exceedingly; but I assumed tranquillity, if I had it not: and I told him I was a soldier, and that, after the severe campaigns we lately had had in Prussia and against the Russians, we were insensible to cold and indifferent to all weathers. He assented to all I said. I then added, " That I had had leave to see my friends,—my regiment was at Strasbourg,—I had been of a sudden ordered to join, and had walked day and night almost all the way from St. Quentin, my native place, lest they should march without me." My unmilitary dress did not accord with this voluble string of impromptu fictions, but, fortunately, my companion was not of either a suspicious or an inquisitive nature; and he contented himself with commending my zeal, and declaring that " we soldiers were wonderful fellows." I was glad to hear him say that he was a butcher, going to purchase cattle; and still more glad when he told me that " he could not bear me

company for more than two miles further." Strasbourg was about three leagues off. At the distance he had named he took leave of me, inviting me to accept a dram from him at a public-house on the roadside. I excused myself, observing, "that I had never been accustomed to drink so early." The excuse had at least a military probability about it, for in France I found the soldiers remarkably sober.

The day was breaking fast, and I was approaching a large town, which made it necessary to get off the highway; so I took the first path to the right, determining to leave Strasbourg on the left, as it was my intention to proceed to Switzerland, if I found any considerable obstacle in attempting to cross the Rhine. I advanced about two or three miles though the fields, then sat down, wiped my feet, and got my shoes (with the legs of my stockings) on, though with great difficulty, as my feet were still very much swelled, and the skin had been partly peeled off. I limped on in great pain, the morning was very

hazy and disagreeable, and I felt excessively weak. The heat of my feet parched the upper leather of the shoes to that degree, that I was frequently obliged to stand in a pool or wet place to cool and soften them. I could perceive that the upper leathers of my shoes had turned white, as if they had been held over the fire, yet I could not go barefooted without exciting fresh suspicions. Thus, roving about in the open fields in excruciating pain and under the greatest dejection of spirits, without being able to discover a hiding-place, I remained for some time, undetermined how to act.

At length I heard a bell ring, and conjectured it must be in some small village. The fog was so thick, that I could not see any distance. I directed my course towards the sound, and found what I had supposed. The village appeared to be a very poor one. After a great deal of hesitation, I resolved to approach the next house, or cottage, to me. My pretext was, to inquire my distance from the road to

Strasbourg. This I accordingly did. I found two young women spinning flax, dressed genteelly, after the German manner. They could not understand me. I made signals that I was thirsty; when one of them brought me some milk, which I swallowed with great eagerness. I offered payment, but she would not take any, and made me understand how sorry they were that they could not speak French. After this, one went out, and shortly returned with a man, who spoke a little broken French: the less, and the more broken, the better for me, for this excused me from being too explicit or communicative. I could willingly have declined her well-meant, but officious services. This man saluted me very kindly, and told me the direction in which I so very much wished to travel. It was evident that I had fallen into very excellent hands; but if hitherto I had been alarmed, endangered, ill-used, and ruined by the brutalities of Nature, I was now likely to suffer more from her humanities.

What were my feelings may be easily imagined, when my civil instructor engagingly informed me, that the mayor of the village was the only man amongst them who spoke my language correctly. At that moment I entertained a most uncharitable wish as to the locality in which his worship might be confined, at least until I could escape. Cerberus and the river Styx would hardly have allayed my fears, or given me confidence in his imprisonment; but who can imagine what my sensations were, when my most officiously kind communicant politely assured me, "That the young woman had been in search of the mayor,—that his worship was not at home: he was, however, expected every minute; and that immediately he returned, he would do himself the pleasure of coming and conversing with me." He concluded by assuring me, that the mayor delighted in paying his respects to strangers. Fortunately, the simple-minded man was no physiognomist: he was not a penetrator into human nature, nor "one that

knows all qualities with a learned spirit of human dealings," or he must have seen, by my ghastly face and agitated features, that all was not right within me. I almost wished that Beelzebub himself had had this polite mayor in his clutches, or that his worship was thrice triply surrounded by the fairies, by the demons of Frieschütz, if not by the worse imps of another place. All the visions of a good cheer, an excellent fire, repose and concealment amongst apparently some of "the best people in the world," were destroyed in a moment, and flight or capture were presented in their stead. I suddenly arose, and, assuming a tone of great gratitude and a sense of obligations, I thanked them cordially for their hospitality, and thanked them most hypocritically for their extreme goodness in wishing to procure me the honour of a visit from the mayor; and I expressed my great regret that I could not wait to receive his worship, as I was in the greatest haste to get to Strasbourg; saying this, I left the house. At that moment I

would almost rather have seen the devil himself, or even General Wirion, than be set down *tête-à-tête* with any mayor in France, and so near to the Rhine.

I limped on through the fields as fast as I could, every now and then looking behind me to see if these well-intentioned people were watching which way I took, or rather whether their officious kindness had led to a pursuit of me. I almost began to suspect that their excessive hospitality had been merely a cloak to cover bad intentions. I was allowed to proceed unmolested, and I regretted my suspicions of such really good people. I found that the heat of their room had swollen my feet more, and greatly increased their pain; and I was obliged to take off both my shoes, and the tatters that I called my stockings. The weather was, fortunately, thick and hazy, and I advanced through the fields, carefully avoiding those in which I could perceive people at work. I had an opportunity this day of getting an excellent supply of

turnips. This part of the country abounds in them; they are the principal food of their cattle; and the peasantry were busily employed in piling them in heaps, and covering them with earth, as the winter store of provender. In one respect, at least, I might have thought myself reduced very much to the condition of Nebuchadnezzar, for both my food and shelter resembled those of the four-footed animals. My punishment, however, was not to be so long.

I have read many amusing squibs and humorous articles upon the complacency with which men adapt words and phrases to suit their practices and vocations; and probably a stipendiary magistrate of London might put an inconvenient construction upon my phrase—"getting an excellent supply of turnips." If duly arraigned, I could only put in two pleas of defence,—the military maxim, "always feed on the enemy; and the apothecary's justification, "My poverty, and not my will, consented."

After a long state of suspense, I descried a

kind of shrubbery about a mile off, and I instantly bent my steps towards it. I found it was a thick enclosure, and well adapted for a hiding place. Though wet to the skin, I immediately began my preparations for the night. My feet were so much worse, that it was utterly impossible to get my shoes on, so I managed to put the upper leathers down and fasten them to my feet with strips of my shirt. With this sort of sandal I tried to walk, but found it little adapted to comfort, and much less to speed. However, I thought I might be able to limp on by some means or other to the Rhine that night. At my usual time I hobbled forth. The night set in with incessant rain, and I found myself in a short time surrounded with marshes and rivers, and in total darkness. The linen fastenings of my shoes having given way, they inconvenienced me very much; nor could I make out whither to direct my course, the night was so thick. After wading through a multiplicity of marshes, I at length found myself in a tolerably

clear country, and my feet felt better from the moisture. It was, however, useless to keep walking on, as I might increase the distance I had to go, instead of diminishing it. I therefore resolved, if I could get a convenient place, to halt, until it should clear up. I espied a house at some distance and made for it, hoping to find shelter near it,—it proved to be a large farm house. It was now about midnight. I got into the yard, and could hear the cattle in the stables and cowhouses feeding. I felt excessively weary and ready to sink; and it appeared wonderful that my exhausted strength, having nothing but turnips to support it, could bear up so well. I was several times tempted to go into the stable and lie down under the manger until day break; but I dreaded lest I should not awake in time, and, consequently, be detected in the morning by the farmers or their workmen. I could not help, notwithstanding, envying the cattle that were so comfortably provided for, though my fears deterred me from attempting to join them,

and I proceeded to some distance from the dwelling into the open fields, where I discovered a few willow-trees by a large dyke, one of which was of a tolerably good size, and its trunk afforded me shelter. It was close to a pathway, which was no small encouragement, as I expected it led my way. I sat down by the willow, and earnestly prayed that the clouds might disperse, and the stars shew themselves and guide me out of the misery I was overwhelmed with. Being excessively faint, I fell into a kind of slumber; and some time had elapsed, when, on a sudden, I was startled at hearing the footsteps of a man. I gathered myself close in under the willow, saw him pass very near, and did not just at that moment know how to act. It was an unseasonable hour for any traveller, and my fears suggested to me that it might be a *gen d'armes* or *douanier*, who was on the look out. However, this was at best only a surmise, and as information was actually indispensable, and as I might not have any other opportunity of obtaining it,

I determined to accost the passenger. I further reflected, that if he should prove a foe or a scoundrel, I might escape from him by stratagem, or come to the worst by contest. Possessed of those ideas, I got up and followed him. He walked so exceedingly fast, that I had to hobble or even run, to overtake him, though the pain occasioned by doing so was excruciating, if not intolerable. On coming up I accosted him in French, and he answered me very civilly. He was in a peasant's garb, but I much feared that this might be merely a disguise. With some little preamble and circumlocution, I asked him my way to Strasbourg. He replied, that I was on the right road; and that, as he was going there, we could accompany each other. Heaven forgive me for hypocrisy, when I assured him I should be glad of his company. The proverb says, that "the —— does fear each bush an officer;" and in this country, where the police assume so many disguises, the fugitive prisoner of war, stealing out of gaol, has a strong fear that

an officer may be found under the frock of a peasant. My companion informed me, that we were only three leagues from Strasbourg.

Although he spoke French tolerably well, I perceived that he had a German accent. This pleased me much, and I began to hope that by devising some very plausible tale, and by feigning to make him my confident, he might be so well deceived, and so much flattered, as not to betray me, even if he were a *gen d'armes* in disguise.

Putting on suitable looks and gestures, I began my story. I told him, that as he appeared to be a friendly, honest, kind of man, I wished to disclose to him who and what I was, where I was going, what were my objects, and how I was circumstanced, and that I earnestly begged for his advice. He listened to me with much complacency. I continued my narrative, and with as pathetic a tone as I could assume. I told him that I was an unfortunate conscript, a native of Switzerland; that I had lately received an

account of the death of my parents, in consequence of which, I had become possessed of a small independence, and that I had applied for permission to go and settle my affairs and had been refused. My companion heard all this with such an appearance of honest sympathy, that I came to my climax, and divulged that this cruel refusal had induced me to desert, and that I had determined never more to serve the French nation. I told him, that I should feel quite secure if I could only get the other side of the Rhine; and concluded by saying, that I relied upon his goodness to direct me, and that I had three crowns which were at his service, if he would only procure me a passage across the river. How fertile are necessity and danger in giving a poor mortal a faculty for invention!

The man continued to the last to listen to me attentively, every now and then stopping and surveying me earnestly. I did not much like his scrutinizing looks. At last, he desired me to be of good cheer, and said, that my confidence in

him was not by any means misplaced; there could not be much risk in crossing the Rhine, and he would direct me how to proceed, and where to procure a boat. We had now walked about a league, and the day was breaking; it was Sunday morning the 22d, and the eighth since I had escaped from my conductors. We had passed a small village about a mile, when he halted quite short or suddenly, felt for his tobacco-box, and exclaimed, "My God, I have lost it!" He thought he recollected where he must have dropped it. I wished to know if it was of any value, otherwise it was not worth turning back for it. He answered, "Yes, my friend, it cost me twenty sols" (ten-pence).—I endeavoured to dissuade him from going back, but all my entreaties proved useless. The fact was, I dreaded this was only a pretext to return to the village, in order to give information and have me arrested; to so high a pitch were my suspicions of the treachery of mankind now arrived. He advised me to remain in a place

which he pointed out, until he came back. I informed him I would; yet I had no intention to keep my promise. He then quitted me, and I directed my course towards the appointed spot; but when I had lost sight of him I changed my position, and after a severe struggle, in the most excruciating agony, I got on the legs of my stockings, my old shoes, and an old pair of gaiters which I managed to button over all. I then placed myself in a tolerably good thicket, where I could see him without being seen. Here I remained in a state of uncertainty very near an hour, when, to my great satisfaction, I saw him returning by himself. I therefore regained the appointed place before he arrived, lest he might discover my suspicions. He had not found the box, and regretted very much its loss. He again began to survey me minutely, and remarked that I was very curiously dressed for a recruit. I answered, that I had procured these clothes for a deception. We were now approaching the ancient and well-

known city of Strasbourg, and could very plainly see its steeples, the principal one of which is acknowledged to be one of the highest and most beautiful in Europe. I was transiently struck by its grandeur; but, whatever admiration I may feel for works of art, I was in that condition which disqualified me for enjoying the sight of church steeples.

The stranger now began his own history, as a return for my communicative confidence. He informed me that he was a Russian by birth, had been a long time in the French army, and had deserted the service. A Russian in the French service struck me as improbable. He then dwelt greatly on the timidity of *young* deserters. He, when he first deserted, thought he should be arrested if he but saw the top of a steeple, and advised me to advance boldly to a part of the Rhine which he would point out, where there were fishermen that would instantly put me across for a mere trifle. I wished him to accompany me to the place, offering him two of

the crowns which he had already refused. He would neither accompany me nor receive the money, but contented himself with assuring me that there was no danger. At about half past seven we were on the high-road, close to the gates of this renowned city. He told me that he must now quit me. I therefore begged of him to accept one crown, which he received with great pleasure. I then shook hands with him, and proceeded in the direction he had pointed out. I have always since considered my meeting with this kind stranger as a providential interference in my favour, at a moment when I was quite at a loss to direct myself, and did not know which way to turn, or what on earth to do.

I had proceeded about half a mile, when, from the number of country people I met going into the city, and from the singularity of my appearance and dress, particularly on a Sunday, I thought it most prudent to get off the highway, and as quickly as possible. I accord-

ingly got into a garden hard by, and seated myself by a brook, in which, cold and unpleasant as it felt, I washed off the mud and dirt, and I scraped and cleaned myself in the best manner I could. I then advanced, passing through several little villages, and crossed the river Ill in a fisherman's small boat, and for two *sols*. This extraordinary success cheered and emboldened me amazingly. I afterwards proceeded eagerly to the place that had been pointed out by my providential guide, whilst my passage of the *Ill* gave me a new confidence in his counsel, with respect to feeling, or at least assuming assurance and composure.

In a short time I caught a view of the broad and majestic river. My heart palpitated with joy, and at length I found myself on the banks of the Rhine.

CHAPTER X.

The Banks of the Rhine — Contemplations of crossing the River irregularly—Difficulties of finding a Legal Passage —Mistaking two armed Officers for two harmless Fishermen — An appeal to Feelings, and a National Assurance of Patriotism — Cattle crossing the Bridge of Khel — An Intermixture with the Cattle, and a Passage over the Rhine — Joy of being out of France, and Blessings of being in Germany — A Progress towards Friburg — A German Village—Contrast between a warm Feather Bed, and Bivouacing in the Mud — An Innocent Landlord clever at a Guess — Another German Inn, and a Luxurious Breakfast — An Escape round Friburg — A Substitute for a Candle—A Night's Rest — En Route to Constance—A Village Inn—A Countryman for a Waiter, and a long Gossip upon Personal Histories, and Native Places — Mistaking a Nobleman's Mansion for a Village —The Inconsistencies of Superstition and Hunger—A numerous Progeny—My Approach to Constance—Effects on the Mind produced by its magnificent Scenery, and beautiful Lake — Crossing a Branch of the Lake Constance — Leaving the Kingdom of Wirtemberg, and entering the Kingdom of Bavaria — Enmity against the French—A Night's rest in a Bavarian Village—La Route to Lindau, — Out-marching an Enemy — The gate to

Lindau — Successfully passing the Sentinels — Elation of Spirits — An awkward Querist—Unsuccessful Invention —A Capture—Examination and Imprisonment—Bitter Reflections upon my cruel Destiny — The vista of Hope, and a fancied Prospect of another Effort to Escape.

It was on Sunday, the 22d day of November, and as I before stated, the eighth day since I had escaped, that all my sufferings and perils were so amply rewarded, by my reaching the margin of this majestic stream, which I arrived at about one in the afternoon, but was distressed at not being able to discover the fishermen's huts that had been described to me by my friend. My anxiety was extreme. This part of the bank of the river was entirely covered with trees and very high grass. In my search, I met a man riding near a by-road; I was a little startled, but he saluted me civilly, took no notice, and passed on. I had traversed the bank in various directions without success, when I at last espied a small punt hauled into a creek, without sculls or paddles, and fastened by a lock and chain to a tree. This I thought might be a

resource for escape, if no better means could be found; but the thought originated in despair, for the river was excessively rapid, and interspersed with shoals and islands, and as I was not more than three or four miles above the bridge of Khel, I might be drifted to nearly that distance were I to endeavour to cross it by myself, and thus, in all probability, fall into the hands of my enemies.

I therefore hesitated, and concealed myself in a thick covert, and rested on the grass, contemplating the course and windings of this celebrated and noble river, eagerly watching, and ardently wishing for an opportunity to quit a country in which I had suffered so severely, from which, if captured, I had so much more to apprehend, and which, therefore, I most cordially detested. I long remained in this state of suspense, perplexed as to what further steps I should take. However, I resorted to my old plan of refreshing myself by a suitable quantity of turnips; and, having found an abundance of

them in the neighbourhood of the city, I was not very sparing of my vegetable diet. After a short time, I recommenced my search; and, in a little boat at a small distance, I observed two men pulling down a narrow creek. I was quite elated at this discovery, as I made sure they were fishermen; and I therefore advanced towards them without any hesitation whatever. I then called to them. On discovering me, they instantly made towards the bank on which I was standing. I need not say how happy I felt at that moment, expecting in a few minutes to be on the German side. But, my God! what was my astonishment, when, as these men approached, I discovered they were armed with muskets and sabres! It was too late to attempt a retreat; and, as I had called them, I imagined that might, in a great measure, do away with suspicion on their part. I therefore waited the result of this rencontre.

One of them immediately jumped out of the boat, and came towards me. I appeared quite pleased; and, although I plainly saw he was going

to interrogate me, I shewed him a *six franc* piece, and very deliberately asked him if he would give me a passage across in his boat? He could not answer me, as he did not understand a word of French; but the man in the boat heard me, and replied, "We cannot, but we are much at your service." I perceived he was a real Frenchman; and having said thus much, he jumped out also.

"I suppose, sir," added he, that you have a passport, and proper papers to entitle you to quit this country?" I made answer, "Certainly. But who authorised you," I asked, "to demand so impertinent a question?" "I am authorised by the mayor of Strasbourg; and, unless you can produce them, I shall be under the necessity of conducting you into his presence as a prisoner." I told him I was very willing to go with him, though it would be certainly a little inconvenient. "I am a *bourgeois*," said I, "of that city, and am under no apprehensions about what his worship may do. I have friends on the

opposite side, whom I promised to visit this evening; it would have been too late if I had taken the round by the bridge; and that was my motive for wishing to get across from where I now am."

This man appeared to be a very acute sort of fellow. "I suspect," added he, "that you are a deserter from the army, and I must conduct you to Strasbourg." I shewed him my dress, and the quality of the cloth I wore (though a little the worse for the late usage, it was superfine), and I asked him "when he had seen a French soldier wear any thing to be compared to it?" "Ay, ay," cried he, "French soldiers know how to disguise themselves in a superior style; so you will have the goodness to come along with us." I remonstrated on the hardship of being thus prevented from going to see my friends. He stamped, and said, "Come along!" The German, more cool and phlegmatic, appeared to mutter something to the other. I embraced this opportunity of altering

my tone and plan altogether; and I addressed the Frenchman nearly in the same words I had done my late Russian guide in the morning, with respect to my opinion of his honesty, goodness of heart, &c. &c., but differed widely in regard to my native place.

I was now come from Wirtemberg, not far from the banks of the Rhine, and had been educated at Paris, where I had relations. At an early age I had been removed to Hanover, where a friend of mine had obtained for me an ensigncy in the King of England's service. At the time the French took that place, I escaped into Prussia, where I got a lieutenancy, and had been made prisoner at the late battle of Jena. I had recently received an account of the death of my parents, who had left me a tolerably good property, and I felt anxious to revisit my native country, from which I had been so long absent. Being closely confined at Chalons (our *dépôt*), I had made my escape, and had now no obstacle to surmount but what

he could easily remedy (meaning the river). I concluded, by requesting him for a moment to consider himself in my situation, and to judge of mine by an appeal to his own feelings. I saw that this reasoning began to work powerfully. I then produced the six livres I had already offered the German, and requested they would accept of them, and put me across. It was a mere trifle, but I was not in a condition to afford more. The Frenchman spoke very feelingly; declared that it was utterly impossible for them to put me over, as they ran a risk of being arrested on the opposite side, and punished for landing anybody clandestinely. They then desired that I would hold up my hand, and declare solemnly that I had committed no crime against the state. To this I could have no objection, and promptly did so. They were satisfied, ordered me *to be off*, and advised me to conceal myself in the wood, saying, "Get over how you can, we will not molest you." I insisted upon their taking the piece of money. They embarked; and I

hurried into the wood, not a little pleased at this narrow escape.

After I got secured in an excellent hiding-place, the whole scene appeared as a dream; nor could I help ejaculating to myself several times, " What a fortunate fellow! What a miraculous escape!" I remained concealed until dark, and then turned my steps towards the city, hoping that I might be more successful in finding a boat; but in this hope I was miserably disappointed. My case seemed desperate.

At day-break, on Monday, November 23, I discovered myself nearly at the entrance of Khel bridge. This bridge was thronged with oxen, and their bellowing, with the cracking of whips, and the whistling, shouting, swearing, and disputing of the drovers, made a hideous noise, and created a great scene of confusion. It struck me suddenly that I might take advantage of the disorder, intermix with the cattle, and pass the bridge, eluding the vigilance of the sentinels. I was harassed, worn out, and weary of being

kept in such a state of suspense, as well as of being perpetually agitated by the conflicts of hope and fear. I felt that I was too much exhausted to continue longer living on my diet of raw vegetables, and without shelter, as the season was getting far advanced, and the weather becoming worse and worse every day. Full of these, and similar reflections, I addressed myself to the all-seeing and beneficent Providence for protection, and I proceeded to seize the opportunity without delay.

I advanced briskly on the bridge; and, getting amongst the cattle, in a very few minutes I had passed the major part of them, as well as the two French sentinels that were muffled up in their centry-boxes at the foot of the bridge. My enterprise, thanks to the oxen, succeeded astonishingly. In a quarter of an hour, to my heartfelt satisfaction, I found myself safe on the German side of the Rhine, having passed, amidst the cattle, I suppose eight or nine French and German sentinels, without

being challenged or noticed by one of them. Thank God, I was now out of France. I might have been partly indebted to the weather for my escape; for the morning was extremely raw and cold, and the sentries kept so well within their boxes, that, amidst the noise, the jostling, and confusion of the cattle, they had but little opportunity of seeing me.

With a light, and most thankful heart, I passed on without interruption, leaving Khel to the left; and, suddenly turning to the right, I soon got on the high road to Friburg. The effect of this escape upon my spirits seemed to give ease and elasticity to my steps, and strength to my whole body. My entire animal frame seemed invigorated; and, as I cast my eye over the broad expanse of the noble river, and saw France, the land of my persecution, on the other side, I gave way to reflections that I may as well not repeat.

After walking as rapidly as, in my state, I could, nearly three leagues, I stopped in a small

village on the high road to refresh myself, having for nearly nine days lived entirely on raw vegetables. I no longer felt the necessity of circumspection, or of lurking about the house to watch for appearances of danger, but I entered boldly, like a freeman, and with the confidence that I had a right to all that I had an intention to demand. I was determined now to pass for a Frenchman, for I was no longer tormented with fears of French *gens d'armes*. At the public-house I went into, without suspicious looks or alarming inquiries, I got readily supplied with plenty of bread and cheese, and a pint of wine, which, though of a very inferior quality, surpassed at that moment any thing I had ever tasted. Danger and sufferings, excessive fatigue and hunger, would make the worst of food seem good and delicious. I remained at this house about an hour, and I found the people very civil. Though so near France, scarcely more than the Rhine between them, I could with difficulty make them understand a word

of the French language, and I found the greatest contrast imaginable in their dress, manners, and habitations.

I was about nine leagues from Friburg. After my refreshing meal, and my comfortable rest at the side of the fire, at about two o'clock I took my leave, and proceeded on my journey fearlessly, keeping the high road. To a man who feels himself free, the very air of Heaven seems sweeter and more refreshing than to the bondsman, and I felt myself in freedom, compared at least to what I long had been.

Owing to the state of my feet, my progress was but slow. I passed through several small villages. At night I began to be perplexed as to how I should act, for I dreaded that the laws of Baden and Wirtemberg, with respect to travellers, might be similar to those of France, and that every landlord or host might be required to demand the passport of his guest, and to exhibit it at the Municipality, before being allowed to supply him with a bed. I did not much like

travelling by night and sleeping in the open fields in Germany, for the police was greatly inferior to that of France, and it seemed to me more than probable, that the roads might be infested with robbers and footpads; and well I knew, that in my exhausted condition, I could oppose but little resistance to personal aggression, though I might have reflected, that my appearance was as little calculated to induce any robber to take the trouble of stopping me.

There was, however, one advantage, if advantage it could be called,—I had little or nothing to be deprived of; but then occurred to me the reflection, that that little was my all, and the all of the poorest, and of the richest, is equally dear to them. If I lost the little I had, my chances of escape indeed became small. After deliberating a long time, I came to the resolution to enter a small poor-looking village then before me: A place of that description appeared the best to try the experiment in. At about half-past seven, I got directed to a public-

house; every thing appeared to favour me, so I entered, and asked if I could be provided with a bed? The landlord answered in very good French, in the affirmative, and added supper also if I wished. I began to be apprehensive of this man. However, in order to save appearances as much as possible, I ordered some supper and wine. After making a hearty meal, I insisted on his taking some wine with me, and then expressed a wish to go to bed, observing, that I was a little fatigued. He ordered the servant to light me to my room, nor did he trouble me with any inquiries. The servant, after giving me a nightcap, retired, and I then secured my chamber door. My feet were in a most shocking condition, not a bit of skin was on the greater part of them; it literally had stuck to the upper leathers of my shoes, and I was under the necessity of moistening them with water, before I could get them off. I then tore a couple of strips from my shirt (which by the bye was now greatly reduced), put some candle-grease on, and applied the strips to the sore

places. My feet being thus dressed, although in a very imperfect manner, I took off my clothes and went to bed. I found it a very good one, though peculiar in its form, which was strange to me; it being the custom of this country to sleep between two feather-beds,* the largest in general uppermost; but I had sheets and a counterpane as in other countries.

Notwithstanding the excruciating pain of my feet, I never in my life felt so happy as at that moment. It is true, that the sensations I felt in the morning after passing the bridge at Khel, were ecstatic, and of a nature that no pen can ever describe, but I really thought that my present feelings exceeded them. I found myself lying in a bed softer to me than down, with a mind tolerably at peace, and Heaven knows,

* This reminds me of an anecdote which a late naval officer once mentioned—that, on being shewn into his bedroom in Germany, he was asked, when between his feather-beds, if he wanted any thing? "No, I thank you," replied he; "only pray tell the gentleman who is to sleep on the upper feather-bed, that I hope he will come soon, as I am very tired."

that to be possessed of peace of mind had lately been but very seldom my lot. After the many nights and days that I had been the sport, or rather the victim of the elements in their unkindest moods, stretched on the bare ground under the canopy of Heaven, without food or raiment, and surrounded by enemies,—to feel the delight I now did, it would have been indispensable to have suffered what I had undergone.

I need not say, that after humbly offering up my most sincere and grateful thanks to the Almighty God, for his goodness and protection, I fell into a most profound sleep, nor did I once open my eyes until daylight the next morning, when, though greatly refreshed, I found my legs exceedingly stiff, and my feet sore in the extreme.

It was impossible for me to walk, and yet I did not like to remain so close to the land of tyranny, and of all my sufferings and indignities. I was, moreover, in the territories of the Con-

federation of the Rhine, and I knew that the power of the French was almost absolute in this temporary protectorate, so recently patched up by Napoleon. Amidst such thoughts I dressed myself, getting the dirt out of my clothes, washing my skin, and making myself as decent as I possibly could. But the worst job of all was to get my shoes on. At last, I even accomplished this, though with great pain and difficulty, and I at length descended and ordered breakfast. Reflecting on the past, the idea of ordering breakfast—the very sounds of the words made me to laugh.

The landlord was obliging and civil, and I found it convenient, to a certain extent, to be communicative. I observed to him, I was very stiff in all my limbs and joints, for I had never been much accustomed to walking, and I had taken it into my head to perform my journey from *Frankfort*, this *last time*, on foot. I added, that I was going to Basle in Switzerland, and wanted to get to Friburg that

evening, and would therefore be much obliged to him if he could procure me a conveyance.

The man seemed to harbour no suspicions, and having sent to inquire if I could be accommodated, he added, "I can guess what you are." I must confess I thought this was coming to rather too close quarters. The position became critical, but I was obliged to humour the moment, and I asked him to guess. To my joy and surprise, he replied, "You are a cloth merchant, travelling to procure customers." There is a vulgar proverb, that "None go so slip-shod as shoemakers' wives;" and I could not help thinking, that if I were a cloth merchant, my clothes afforded but a very sorry specimen of my warehouse. However, I told him that I admired his penetration, and he seemed very much pleased at his cleverness in discovering, not only what I was, but why and wherefore I was travelling. I paid him my bill, which was rather moderate. He provided the cloth merchant with a kind of *voiture*, which could, he

said, carry me only six leagues. This was excellent fortune—exactly what I wished, as there was no place on the road of any consequence within that short distance. Had I been obliged to take it on to *Friburg*, I intended to have made an excuse, and to have stopped at some village short of that town.

We soon agreed about the price, and I got into this substitute for a carriage; the proprietor was postilion; it was an open machine made of twigs woven together, and forming a rude wicker-work. The morning was thick, with a drizzling rain. I borrowed a great coat from the landlord, and off we set,—a great change was this in my mode of travelling! I had several turnpikes to pay, and I confess I was alarmed, that the gate keepers might ask for my passport at some of these *barrières;* but I was agreeably disappointed, my honest driver observing to them, that I was, *ein Franschose, going to Basle,* which proved sufficient for them and very gratifying to me. At about four o'clock, the driver stopped

at a public-house in a small village, to refresh his horse; but nothing particular occurred there. Some Germans, however, who were drinking, and all of whom, I believe, possess a natural detestation of the French, made several remarks on the strange Frenchman. The very graceful bow I made at leaving the house, excited a roar of laughter from every one, and *Franschose!* was vociferated throughout the room.

At about six o'clock in the evening, we stopped at a very respectable-looking village; my conductor made me understand he was going to leave me there, and that I was but three leagues from *Friburg*. I discharged him, and went to a genteel tavern. They sent for a man who could speak French, to inform them what I wished to have. A very gentleman-like person made his appearance, and I apprehended in the beginning it might be the mayor, but my fears were without foundation; owing to this gentleman's goodness in explaining matters, I got a private apartment and a good supper, and

went to bed, very happy and comfortable at not having been asked any question. In the morning I arose betimes, went through a painful process with respect to my feet, similar to that which I have already described. This was the only serious evil I had now to endure. I ordered breakfast, and the genteel interpreter evidently took me for a gentleman, for he came to ask me, if after breakfast I would want a carriage. I could not help smiling at the question, when I reflected on my scampering amongst the cattle over Khel bridge, only two mornings before. I merely replied, that as I had but three leagues to go, I preferred walking. What would I not have given for a carriage, or even for "a lift," or a donkey's back, or in a dog cart, if it were strong enough, in the throbbing and aching state of my lacerated feet! My appearance did not warrant the conclusion, that I was of the carriage class of society, and my reply, that the distance was *only* three leagues, on a heavy road, and in a bad day of November, corrobo-

rated the fact, that I had low funds, and was not accustomed to quail at vulgar toil or fatigue. This preference, as a matter of taste, was singular. I further reflected, that it might not be easy, either with my finances, or with my travelling character, to pass through such a town as Friburg in a carriage; and Heaven knows, that, at that moment, I would have been most happy to have compromised matters, by a certainty of passing through it on foot, or of getting round it in any manner, in the style I had been accustomed to on the other side of the Rhine.

My breakfast was now ready, and when I saw coffee, toast, and eggs on the table-cloth, and thought of my cabbage-stalks and turnips and the mud, of only three days ago, my head, I fancied, began to turn, and myself to suspect that what I had read in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" might, after all, have something of truth in it. To me, it had long been a novelty to have any thing before me that a human being not actually starving could eat.

My gentlemanly interpreter kept me in conversation the whole time, and the part I had to play was to reveal as little—as little of truth, at least, as possible, and to receive as much information as I could, taking very good care to separate the chaff from the wheat. The dialogue sometimes kept me on the tenter-hooks of alarm.

"That is a kind of breakfast, sir, which Englishmen in general like."

This word, Englishmen, never sounded so unpleasantly in my ears. I thought the fellow was either pumping me, or that he was giving me a hint that he knew or suspected that all was not right; or that he, in fact, had discovered my false colours.

A large piece of toast in my mouth, at once gratified appetite and was an excuse for not answering.

"Englishmen," continued my tormentor, "only differ from you, in dipping their toast in their coffee."

I laconically replied, by an indisputable general principle, " I believe, people of all nations like what is good."

But I could not afford to be taciturn or churlish, and I felt the necessity of unbending, and I therefore added, that I had myself been in England, and for a long time; but that I had known what a good breakfast was, before I had visited *that* country.

I laid a stress upon *that*, in order to make it appear, as a Frenchman, that I was piqued at his talking about England.

The conversation, to my happiness, ended; I paid my bill, which was moderate, took leave of my German host, and of his genteel interpreter, and with a well-satisfied appetite, and dry clothes, I set out for Friburg.

After all, as I went along, I very frequently repented that I had not confided to my talkative friend, " the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," in order that he might either have put me in the way of procuring a passport,

or at least have told me what the laws of the country really were with respect to travelling. My ignorance on the subject was most distressing, and occasioned me a great deal of unnecessary difficulty and fatigue.

About noon, I discovered the high spire of the church of Friburg.* I must confess, that it created in me a strong emotion, or rather train of emotions. It very much resembled that of Strasbourg, and although not on so grand a scale, it appeared more interesting, because I was no longer under the dangers that had made me insensible to such objects of grandeur, beauty, and veneration; and because it was now more a haven of hope than what that of Strasbourg had been, a signal of suspicion, doubt, or alarm.

* *Friburg* is a large town, the capital of *Brisgau;* its steeple is deemed the most beautiful on the Continent, except that of *Strasbourg*. There was a famous university here formerly. The inhabitants are remarkable for polishing crystal and precious stones. It has been several times taken and retaken. The French demolished the fortifications in 1744. It formerly belonged to the House of Austria, but at present is subject to the Elector of Baden.

I advanced towards the town, still preserving every precaution, and especially, painful as was the effort, doing my utmost to avoid the appearance of being lame.

Friburg is surrounded by a lofty chain of immense mountains, which appear almost inaccessible.

Notwithstanding the success and encouragement I had met with on this side of the Rhine, the recollections of all I had endured on the other, made me cautious of entering, or even approaching a great town; and yet, I was obliged to walk directly, and in open day, towards Friburg, since, from the miserable state of my feet, a circuitous course was to me impossible.

I reconnoitred the place in every point of view, and at last, timidly and cautiously, I approached the western gate. Being very uncertain how to proceed, I did not think it prudent to enter, and the appearance of a huge grenadier at the gate, walking up and down at his post, made me turn short on my heel, and relinquish

every idea of passing that way. I walked back nearly half a mile; and fortunately discovered a path leading round by the northern side of the wall, or rather ruins, as there are few vestiges of the former wall to be seen. Advancing, I suddenly came into an old square, where a small number of recruits were exercising, and in a few minutes I was on the outside of the eastern gate. I had still a sentinel and a guard-house to pass. However, I accomplished that without experiencing any difficulty; they supposed, no doubt, that I came out of the town. I felt now peculiarly happy, since I found that another great obstacle to me was surmounted. As I was so successful on the German side, I determined not to go into Switzerland; particularly as my course was to *Salzburg*, and thence to *Trieste*. I knew the French influence was great in Switzerland, and that *gens d'armes* were frequently despatched from France, to look out in the Cantons for deserters. I therefore took my direction for *Constance*, a town of Suabia, seated on the lake

of the same name. The little map I had, gave only the names of the larger places, which perplexed me very much; and after leaving *Friburg, Constance* was the next town which appeared on the line that I wished to take. I found the road very mountainous and irregular. I met several waggons. As I got warm, my feet became more easy and supple, and I advanced apace. About five o'clock in the afternoon, I had passed *Friburg* two leagues; it was rapidly getting dark, no house was in sight, and a very lonesome solitary road was before me; I kept going on, but felt very weary and exhausted. At about eight o'clock I discovered a mill on the road side, and to my great joy a contiguous dwelling-house. I made out a sign also, projecting over the door—rapped, and received admittance. I made the people understand that I wanted a bed, and they bade me sit down. I thought this a good omen. I wished for something to eat very much, and they brought me a dish of boiled milk with bread

broken into it, and seasoned highly with pepper. This they styled milk-soup, and it was all the house afforded.

Not having tasted any thing since my English breakfast in the morning, about seven o'clock, I was not very nice. They appeared poor and miserable in the extreme: their light came from deal chips, dried and stuck in a sort of stick, made on purpose for that use, or as a substitute for a candlestick. I was shewn to bed, and was agreeably surprised; for it was a much better one than I had any reason to expect in such a place. In the morning I had some of the same kind of soup, and my bill, as it ought to be, was very reasonable. I was informed that Constance was nineteen leagues distant, and away I limped, although at first my feet were very sore and stiff. I met several people on the road, none of whom appeared to take the smallest notice of me. About six in the evening, the weather became very inclement; and, finding

myself close to a small village, I purposed taking up my abode in it for the night.

I accordingly went into a public-house, and was shewn upstairs into the coffee-room: in these places the public sitting-room is generally on the first floor. There I found a number of people drinking, and a respectable-looking priest at their head. I made my *entrée à la Française*, as near as I was able, and asked, "If I could have a bed?" I could get no answer; but the landlady called aloud for her domestic, Pestre, or Peter, who, she said, was a Frenchman, to explain. He at length appeared; and asked, in very good French, "What I wished to have?" Before I gave him a direct answer, I pretended to rejoice at finding a countryman (as I still wished to appear as a Frenchman) so unexpectedly in that remote part, and said, "I should like to have some conversation respecting our old country presently; but wished first to know if I could be accommodated with a

bed and something for supper?" He replied, "Certainly:" and added, "I shall take care that you are well attended upon." This poor fellow was really very attentive and kind. I supped heartily on soup and *boulli;* after which I insisted upon his giving me his history, which he did without any hesitation. It was as follows:

"I was born, sir, in Nancy, in Lorrain, and it is now eleven years since I quitted my native place."

Here I thought fit to interrupt him, in order the better to preserve the disguise which I had assumed. I told him "that I had observed, the moment he began to speak, a vast difference between his accent and mine, and I had consequently conjectured that he had been a long time absent from Lorrain;" and I added, "that the Lorrain accent was very different from that of other parts of France." This interruption was fortunate and well-timed; for the man, by way of rejoinder, said,

"I have forgotten a great deal of my mother

tongue; and I can tell you that I was going to make the same remark with respect to your accent that you have made upon mine; but now you have saved me the trouble, by accounting for the difference. But, to continue my narrative, I assure you, sir, all that has befallen me has been the consequence of my having been drawn for a conscript; for it went against my nature to serve Buonaparte. I was by trade a weaver, and I knew that I could get a living in any country; and, painful as it was to part from my family and friends, I one morning took French leave, crossed the Rhine, and have been eight years with my present landlord. He keeps a kind of manufactory, in which I have worked until very lately; but, wishing to have a trusty person in the *auberge*, he has made me drop my old trade of weaver, and attend here in my present capacity."

I now asked him if he had ever been in Normandy; which, I said, was my part of France.

He emphatically said "Never:" and ex-

pressed a wish to know what trade I belonged to. Here my invention was put to the stretch; but, with as much readiness as I could command, I told him that I was a *marchand de drap*, travelling to Constance to receive orders. As a weaver, this honest fellow must have known much more of cloths than I did, and a further conversation would have exposed my ignorance; so, allowing no time for another interrogatory, I added, "I am exceedingly weary, and wish to retire to bed;" and upon this he civilly conducted me to my chamber, and took his leave without another word, except the usual good night. My bed was very comfortable, and I slept very sound, enjoying my good quarters, and reaping all the benefits of refreshment from repose. In the morning I settled with my pretended countryman, shook hands, and parted from him.

I proceeded on the high road until two o'clock, when, greatly to my alarm, I met with an armed man in a very retired part of the road. I

conjectured that he was a police-officer; but, to my surprise, he asked me no questions, and I joyfully pursued my way.

At the close of the evening, I discovered at a distance what I took to be a number of houses, and I was highly elated, as I imagined them to be a village. Under this pleasing illusion I trudged on, with increased spirits; but, on arriving at my objects, what was my astonishment to find that the buildings, instead of being the humble dwellings of simple villagers, were the numerous out-offices of the splendid mansion of a nobleman! One of the liveried servants, however, very civilly answered all my questions; and, with much kindness of manner, directed me to a village, but at such a distance, that it was very late before I arrived at it. However, late as it was, I contrived to procure a bed and a supper. My host and hostess were, unfortunately for hungry stomachs and ravenous appetites, a little prone to the bane of life called superstition; and, as it was Friday, they abso-

lutely refused to let me have any meat: but still the keen edge of hunger enabled me to enjoy a supper of eggs and milk, and their faith did not compel their consciences to limit me in quantity. I had a good bed. My landlord and his wife were very young, and they exhibited a most extraordinary instance of fecundity, for they had sixteen children: most of whom, they gave me to understand, were twins. It is evident that in this country population did not press too closely on supply, and perhaps the reason was, that the succession of cruel and bloody wars had reaped a large harvest in the game of life: but let Malthusians solve the problem how they may, all I know is, that my young host and hostess, with their fat progeny of sixteen children, seemed well off, affectionate, and happy. A man so worn out and exhausted as I was, could have slept, according to Shakspere's doctrine, "on the high and giddy mast;" but I doubt whether a man well at his ease would wish to take his night's lodging at

a house in which there were sixteen noisy children.

In the morning I quitted them, and walked towards Constance. I had not gone above a league, when I descried the beautiful lake of that name. The town of Zurich was in view. The high mountains of Switzerland, the summits of which were covered with snow, the variegated, beautiful plains at the bottom, interspersed with corn-fields, vineyards, wood, and herbage, struck the eye with admiration, and afforded a prospect truly magnificent. At about five in the afternoon, I was close to the town of Constance.* It appeared large: a number of buildings, repre-

* Constance was formerly a large strong town, in the circle of Suabia, with a bishop's see, whose prelate was a prince of the empire; it is famous for a council held in it in 1514, when there were three popes: but they were all deposed, and Martin the Fifth was elected in their room. The council caused Jerome of Prague to be burnt, though the Emperor Sigismund had given him a safe conduct. In pursuance of this maxim—that no faith was to be kept with heretics—they condemned the doctrine of Wicliffe, and ordered his bones to be burnt, forty years after he had been dead. The inhabitants now are mostly Protestants.

senting monasteries and steeples, presented themselves to view, and seemed to be memorials of its ancient splendour; but its present state indicated that it had been a long time neglected. The lake* looked very beautiful, and was a little agitated, as there was rather a strong wind.

Even those who have felt the raptures which luxuriant, beautiful, and sublime scenery can impart to the sensitive mind, can form no idea of the feelings that overpowered me when this most superb and enchanting landscape suddenly broke upon my view; for, whilst it was contrasted with all that I had so painfully passed through, it reminded me of my triumphs over difficulties, and impressed me with the joyful prospects of ultimate success and liberty.

Lindau, at the lower end of the lake, was the next large town in my direction. I was

* The lake of the same name runs between Suabia and Switzerland: it is thirty miles in length, and eight in breadth: it is crossed by the river Rhine.

deliberating on the best mode of acting for the night, whether I had better take up my abode in the vicinity of the town, or proceed further towards Lindau, when I met with two young men, genteelly dressed. I saluted them, which they returned very politely. Both spoke French. I inquired what distance I was from Lindau? They informed me, fourteen leagues; and that I should have to cross a branch of the lake. Of this latter necessity I had been totally ignorant; for the map, by which I guided myself through, to me, these unknown regions, was too small and imperfect to afford very accurate information. As the wind became very strong, the strangers advised me not to venture upon the passage until the next day. They little knew my motives for rapidity. Of course, I concealed my ignorance of this impediment, or rather pretended that I was aware of it; and I added, "that I had such particular business at Lindau, that I must endeavour to get there that

night, and should cross the passage if possible." They rather earnestly tried to dissuade me, and then politely took their leave.

My difficulties in crossing the water arose from a source very different from what they had imagined. My formidable obstacles and dangers were not the elements, but my fellow-man. I had now to learn whether I could cross this branch without a passport, and without giving — what of all things was the most inconvenient for me to give — some account of myself. "To prate of my whereabouts," was probable ruin; and never was there a man so little ambitious of talking of himself as I was at that moment. However, the necessity of decision, firm and immediate, was absolute; and, without much foreboding of evil, I entered a public-house, close to the water, in order to learn what I should have to undergo.

I was shewn into a room, in which, to my annoyance, was a concourse of people, some of whom appeared to be waiting for the boat. I

mixed with the crowd with all the seeming carelessness and *nonchalance* I could assume, and called for a small measure of wine, as I saw others do; and, in fact, I settled down amongst the multifarious assemblage as if I was "quite at home." I had the eyes of Argus; and, whilst I listened to every sound, I was as little communicative as possible. I felt that I was at a crisis of my fate. At last, two watermen entered, and announced that the boat was ready. I was obliged to assume a courage, and to obey the summons, as if it were a matter of course; and to my joy I found that, although I was leaving Wirtemberg and entering into the territory of Bavaria, not a passenger was required to produce a passport, or to give any account of himself.

When we were about to embark, I observed that all the passengers paid one half-florin each, while the boatmen demanded two florins of me. Never was a man more willing to submit to imposition and extortion than I was at that

moment; but my funds were quickly ebbing to neap-tide, if not to low-water, and it struck me that my best policy was to resist any thing that separated or distinguished me from the general mass.

I therefore objected to the imposition so stoutly, that the boatmen resolved to detain me until they called their master, or the owner of the boat. I must confess that my heart began to misgive me, and I thought that I was carrying the quarrel a little too far. However, there was no receding; and, at such a dangerous crisis, to play two characters was certain destruction.

At length, the owner of the boat, a very little and old hump-backed man, that might have passed for Obi among the negroes, made his appearance. The old hunchback, with the utmost civility that a rogue could put on when about to cheat a fellow-creature in distress, addressed me as follows: — "Monsieur, if you do not choose to pay, you may act as you please, and you can remain where you are." This was absurd logic

to my ears, and very inconvenient reasoning to my pocket; but, whilst I was pondering for a politic and cautious reply, the tormentor resumed his license of speech, and said, "Monsieur, you are a Frenchman; and as your friend and master, Buonaparte, robs and plunders every body, I hold it to be all fair that I make you Frenchmen pay what I please."

I must confess that this identification of me with a Frenchman gave me an assurance that my real character was not suspected; and, although my purse was nearly at low-water mark, I paid the cross-grained, old curmudgeon, his four hundred per cent profit upon ferrying over a Frenchman.

Heavens! how my heart rebounded at hearing the splashing of oars, and at feeling myself once more afloat. It was, to a sailor, a pigmy water and a pigmy passage; and yet the rapid succession of ideas that rushed through my mind of old England's navy and the glorious ocean almost overpowered me. The reminiscence of

my young nautical life was delightful; but then came the sad reflection of the time I had been a prisoner, and how much this reduced the hopes of one whose whole soul was absorbed in the love of his profession, and in all the ambition of excelling in it, and of arriving at its highest rank.

Our Lilliputian voyage was only about four miles, and yet, in the midst of it, I had nearly exposed or betrayed myself; for a sudden puff of wind or slight squall, coming off the land, would have upset the boat, had I not snatched the sheet (of the sail) from the hand of the clumsy fellow that managed it. This was "the ruling passion" strong in every thing. The boatmen seemed astonished: they stared at each other, but said nothing. In fact, I had acted imprudently. A Frenchman is seldom or never considered to be a sailor; and every Englishman is viewed by a foreigner as a man naturally familiar with all nautical affairs; and our boatmen, I apprehended, began to suspect that " I was no Frenchman."

We now reached the opposite shore, and

entered the territory of Bavaria. All territories that I had passed through, except the last, had been to me so disastrous, that any change operated on me as an enchantment; and increasing my distance from the country in which I had suffered so much, was, in fact, a charm. But fears were mixed up with my elation; for we were about to land at a small fortified town: and ramparts, embrasures, and bristling guns, presented to my mind strong ideas of examining passports, and of even searching persons, with the inevitable result of chains, handcuffs, and a dungeon.

The sound of drums saluted my ears in all directions, and I feared it was for the shutting of the gates. Being landed, I continued with the others, passing through the street, and inquired, without causing suspicion, "What time the gates would be closed?" They replied, "In three-quarters of an hour." To my unspeakable joy, no person appeared to inspect papers. My fellow-passengers went to an inn, and I asked for the nearest way out of the town on the

Lindau road. Having received the required information, I proceeded, and, to my great delight, finding the gate open, I very soon passed it. I met several military men in the streets, and there was a sentinel's box at the gate. However, the darkness of the night and inclemency of the weather favoured me greatly at this moment.

I proceeded about two leagues, without falling in with a living creature, or seeing any thing like a habitation. I at length saw lights, and soon arrived in a small village. I was uncertain whether there might not be different regulations in Bavaria from those I had experienced in Baden, Suabia, and Wirtemberg; but necessity urged me on, and I went into a public-house, and got a bed and supper. Several people were drinking in the room where I was: they laughed heartily at my Frenchified bows and scrapes, and wished me to drink with them, but which I declined. I was anxious to go to bed: the servant came to light me; and I endeavoured, in

wishing them a good night, to display my French politeness as much as possible. Therefore, drawing my shoulders up to my ears, I made each of my half-intoxicated friends a most graceful, or rather graceless, bow: they set up a horse laugh, and I retired — the fellow who conducted me laughing, also, the whole way. I slept tolerably well, and felt happy at having amused those fellows, at the same time that my grimaces answered my own purpose.

At daybreak, on Sunday, November 29, I got some breakfast, and proceeded towards Lindau.* My feet were getting better, and I advanced with great glee. After passing through several picturesque villages on the banks of the lake, at about five o'clock of the afternoon, I saw the town of Lindau, and calculated that it was between four and five miles off. I halted at a

* Lindau was formerly a free and imperial town, but now belongs to the King of Bavaria. It is situated on an island, on the lake in the circle of Suabia. The inhabitants are chiefly Protestants.

small village to refresh myself, as well as because I conjectured that it was too early, though it was apparently at a respectable distance, to pass by the town, more especially as it appeared large; and as it, moreover, struck me, that being Sunday, I should have to meet many people in the environs. I therefore entered a public-house, and found in it two women and a man eating their dinner, or rather supper. From the landlady, who was an old woman, I got some wine, bread, and sausages, and I contrived to amuse away, or rather to spin out, the time until it was nearly seven o'clock. I now judged it proper to proceed; and, paying the old dame, I set out, full of hope, not unmixed with care and anxiety, but still little suspecting the extent of the evil that was to befal me.

I had not proceeded many hundred yards, when I discovered that several soldiers were walking very fast behind me. I thought that they might be in pursuit of me. I next conjectured, that if they were not in chase, they

were making speed, in order not to be shut out of the town for the night. Either calculation was a sufficient motive for me to move in double-quick march, but never had man his feet, although they were improving, in a worse state for escaping a pursuer, or for gaining a march upon time. However, notwithstanding all my disadvantages, I contrived to keep a-head of the enemy. I continued at this pace for about three-quarters of a league, until, upon turning suddenly an angle on the road, I discovered that I was close to the gate that led to the town. I likewise saw the town itself, at a considerable distance, on an island, and found that this was the gate of the bridge which connected that island with the main land.

The soldiers were close in the rear; I therefore did not think it prudent to turn back: and I flattered myself that there was no necessity, as I perceived that my road led to the *left*, after passing the gate on my right hand. I thought that our course might be in opposite directions.

In this hope I proceeded—passed the gate and sentinel — not a question was asked me, or a look bestowed upon me — my heart rebounded with joy—I was safe—my sufferings were rewarded, and a glorious triumph filled my imagination, even to ecstasy. Lameness was forgotten; and I was, if I may use the term, tripping along full of visions of the little I should have to undergo, of the little time that would elapse ere I should be again upon England's element, under her glorious flag, and in the exercise of all my duties of a naval officer.

Alas! how frail are all human hopes! In this state of mind I was suddenly stopped by an elderly man, who, it appeared, had followed me from the gate. He very civilly asked, in German, if I had a passport. As a *ruse de guerre,* I replied, in French, " That I did not understand his language." To my surprise and alarm, he readily met my reply, and, in excellent French, politely expressed his desire *to see my passport.* I wished him and his question

in a worse place than limbo or the river Styx; but, as my invention had so often been put to extremities, I was not at a loss to parry his unpleasant interrogatories. I assured the old gentleman that I had lost the whole of my papers, and, I added, what was worse, almost all my money, with several little articles of property, whilst I was crossing the lake on the preceding evening. In fact, I said that my pocket-book had dropped out of my pocket, and sunk to rise no more, as the money it contained had, unfortunately, made it too heavy to float.

The old gentleman seemed so thoroughly to believe me, that I also added, that I was going to Inspruck,* where I had some friends; and, as the journey would last only two or three days, I thought I could proceed without any interruption. At all events, I intended to make the experiment.

* The capital of the Tyrol, with a strong castle, is very populous, and was formerly the residence of the archdukes of Austria. It is seated in a pleasant valley on the river Inn, sixty-two miles south of Munich.

At this moment several soldiers advanced from the gate towards me; and as I had, to all appearances, so perfectly satisfied the old gentleman, I thought that they came only out of curiosity, or even politeness.

At last the keeper of the gate, with a kindness which I most willingly could have excused, assured me that Inspruck was further off than I imagined,—that it would be inconvenient for me to continue my journey without papers,—and he reminded me that it was now getting very late.

I told him that I was accustomed to late hours, and quite indifferent to inconveniences, and that it did not suit me to delay my journey.

My jesuitical tormentor took me up on my own grounds, and replied, that to a man so accustomed to late hours, and so indifferent to inconveniences, it could be of little concern to be detained only one night; especially as the delay would be so amply compensated by the increased facilities of travelling which I would

enjoy, from the new papers that the commandant of Lindau would give me on the following morning. No logic could be more sound, but never did reasoning fall more unpleasantly upon a human ear.

I thanked this gate-keeper, and all around me, for their kind intentions, and, assuring them that I preferred following my own course, I made them many polite bows, and turned my back in the act of pursuing my journey. Upon this, the polite old gentleman gave me to understand, what I had long understood, that the plain English of all his politeness was, that he meant to *detain* me, although he was willing to do it as civilly as possible. Suiting the action to the word, he called a body of soldiers to enforce his politeness.

I was obliged to command my countenance, and to control all emotions, bitter as they were. With the utmost appearance of calmness, I replied, "You need no assistance, my good friend, I am ready to accompany you wherever

you please, although it is putting me a little out of my way, and subjecting me not to a little inconvenience." Would to Heaven that the inconvenience had been little!

I accompanied my captor with an aching heart. "Oh! cruel destiny," said I to myself, "how far different are my feelings now from what they were, when, after nine days' wandering through woods, swamps, and marshes, and over mountains, I crossed the Rhine by the bridge of Khel. Heavens," said I, in the bitterness of my grief, "after the misery, the excruciating pain, I have endured, after all I have dared, and all I have overcome, have I reached this distance from my imprisonment, have I so far approached towards my object,—an English ship, only to have all my hopes blasted, and to be led back to captivity!"

In this state of mind did I follow my captor. I commanded my feelings sufficiently, however, to reflect, that my only hope of escape rested upon my making out a plausible story for the

commandant, and I spun the web of an ingenious fiction as I proceeded under my escort.

At about half-past eight we arrived at the commandant's quarters, and I was ushered into an extensive vestibule. In a few minutes, the great man made his appearance. He was magnificently dressed, wore his sword, and, as I was given to understand, was on the point of going to the *Opera*. He seemed vexed at so vulgar a cause of detention from his amusment; and I am sure that I was equally vexed, or rather by far more vexed, at inconveniencing so august a personage.

This commandant could not speak French, and was obliged to wait for his secretary and interpreter, who no sooner arrived, than he called for pen, ink, and paper, placed himself at a table, and with a great deal of ridiculous consequence, ordered me to advance and answer the questions he should put to me:—He then proceeded in the following manner. "What countryman are you, pray?" "A Frenchman." "What part of France

were you born in?" "In Rouen, in Normandy." "Proceed and give an account of yourself." "My name is *Louis Gallique*" (the cook's name of our late frigate *Hussar*"); "my father was a surgeon in *Rouen*, where I have got a brother (of the same profession) and two sisters. My parents have been dead some time. I got my reform, or discharge from the army, through my brother's interest. I am going to *Inspruck* to see some friends, thence I intend to proceed to *Vienna*, where I expect to be employed as a clerk in a counting-house." "How did you lose your pocket-book and papers?" "In crossing a branch of the lake, a puff of wind was near oversetting the boat; my pocket-book must have dropped out as I was leaning over. I cannot account for losing it in any other manner. It was a very great misfortune, as I lost all my money, with the exception of a few loose pieces which I kept in my pocket, and also my letters of recommendation, passport, papers, &c." "What are your German friends' names?" I gave him

French names, and told him, they were all of French extraction. He then began to explain the whole to the commandant; and after some minutes' consideration, he informed me, " That I appeared to be a very suspicious character, and they must send me to the guard-house for the night. In the morning I should be lodged in gaol, until I could be identified by the French government, or (in the meantime) by my friends at *Inspruck* or *Vienna*." I exposed the cruelty of such conduct to a subject of the great Napoleon, who was their ally, and the protector of the Confederation of the *Rhine*. I added, they might now act as they thought proper, but I had friends who would have their conduct made known. They made no reply, and I was escorted to the guard-house. In an hour after, I was brought back and underwent a similar examination. They then ordered me to the common gaol, where they apprized me, I should be very indifferently treated — in consequence of their suspecting me to be a spy. I disdained so opprobri-

ous an epithet; remonstrated with them again upon the cruelty of their conduct; but they were inflexible, and I departed the second time with the guard.

On my way to the gaol, I reflected on the horrors of being thrown into prison, perhaps cast into a dungeon amongst malefactors of every denomination; and the certainty, in a few days, of being discovered. I also imagined they might treat me with more kindness, if I acknowledged who I was. I therefore, after much of conflicting calculations, desired the chief of my escort to conduct me back to the commandant, which he did. I then told them frankly, who and what I was, and how I had escaped. He said, he thought I was an Englishman; and brought a list of the description of prisoners of war, which he had lately received from France, and pointed out my name, before I mentioned it. He asked me where my comrades were. I now discovered that this description had been drawn up on our first escape from *Verdun*. I assured him I could

[illegible] my own life—[illegible] I [illegible] as much as I can be for me. I was [illegible] I now was. [illegible] me. [illegible] me: [illegible] I [illegible] [illegible] me [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] I [illegible] [illegible] I was [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

CHAPTER XI.

A fresh Incarceration — Stripping a Prisoner naked, a more effectual Detainer than Chains and Padlocks—Distracted Thoughts and raving Dreams — Hopes of Escape prove delusive—Gaol Surgery, and Gaol Diet—A Swiss Prisoner for Debt—A timely Loan of Books—Dreadful Effects of Solitary Confinement upon Youth—A short Visit from the Swiss Captive—Orders to prepare for a Return to France—A heavy Chain and huge Padlock — Fruitless Remonstrances—The Mob at Lindau—Leave-taking between a Prisoner and the Gaoler and Gaoler's Wife — Gazing at a departing Prisoner — the Road to France— Going to Bed in Chains — Our Progress on the Road to Strasbourg—Strict Watchings—Chances of a Rescue— Anticipations of the Horrors of Bitche—Commiseration of my Guards — Reflections on the German and French Characters — Crossing the Bridge of Khel—A Surrender to the French *Gens d'Armes*—Captivity in the Military Gaol of Strasbourg — A bitter Frost and a damp Cell — Proposal of a Fire — A ready Acquiescence, but an Empty Purse—A kind Gaoler and as kind a Wife — His Gratitude for English Kindness when a Prisoner of War — A sudden Transition from Misery to Comfort—Examined by the Police—Affectionate leave-taking of the Honest Gaoler and his Wife—On the Road to Bitche heavily chained to Eleven Corsicans going to suffer Military Execution — The Horrible Dungeon of Nider-

Bronn—A Revolting Night's Confinement — Brutality of the Guard—Dreadful Sufferings of two of the Corsican Soldiers—Distant Prospects of Bitche—Depression of Spirits—Anticipations of a cruel Confinement—Arrival at the Fortress.

It was on a dreary Sunday night, the 29th of November (1807), that I was led into this gaol. The gaoler and his keepers placed me in a tolerably decent, well-furnished apartment, with a bed, stove, table, and chair. This was ample for the accommodation of unsophisticated man, but external conveniences are not a substitute for the cravings of hunger; and even if, not to contradict the words of the poet, a man could cloy the hungry edge of appetite with bare imaginations of a feast, it had been such a length of time since I had fed on any thing save roots and raw vegetables, or had tasted, at best, any thing but the scanty and meagre fare of road-side inns, or of gaol allowances, that it was far beyond my imagination to form an idea of what a feast meant. I therefore pointed out to my keepers the exhausted state of my body, and begged

that I might have some refreshment, however humble, or however small. This they granted; but they previously searched me—stripped me—took away the whole of my clothes, with all that my pockets contained—which consisted, however, of nothing but a knife, a razor, and a few pieces of silver. They assured me that all my *property* should be returned to me at a proper time; but I entreated them to leave me at least my pantaloons. With this they at length complied. With respect to my shirt, as the collar and ragged sleeves were all that remained, I was indifferent to the comfort of preserving it.

I expostulated with my persecutors, and begged to know the reason of such cruel treatment. They surlily replied, that it was the custom of their country, and that they would take care to prevent my getting away again. "People who had a great talent for getting out of gaols ought to be treated accordingly," they said, and they added, that they would prevent my escaping from their clutches. Saying this,

the morose brutes swung-to the massy door, and my ears were greeted with the noise of locks, bars, bolts, and my eyes with the prospect of chains, that seemed heavy enough to secure the bodies of a regiment or an army.

In this state of nudity and solitude I began, with inexpressible grief and bitter affliction, to meditate upon my unfortunate destiny. At length, a thought flashed upon my mind. Although my cell in its masonry seemed as strong as the bomb-proof easement of a fortress, and my ears had informed me of the massive strength of the door, and its ponderous securities or fastenings, yet it struck me that there might be some point of weakness of which I might avail myself to effect my escape. It is astonishing how Providence, in its mercy, at the hour of the most bitter afflictions, supplies us with hope to alleviate our sufferings. It does not signify that the hope is delusive, for it answers the object; and the pleasure of indulging in it is longer and greater than the subsequent pain of disappoint-

ment. In this disposition to hope, every thing tends to gratify or favour the inclination; and I even inferred, from their taking away my clothes, in order to prevent my escape, that they were conscious that the gaol was weak in some point or other. In this pleasant delusion I waited with anxiety till daylight, that I might make all the observations in my power, and I felt determined to be off on the following night, even if I should be stark naked afterwards.

Except when these hopes and frail calculations passed my mind, I was a prey to the most cruel torments. I never slept—I merely slumbered: and in those brief slumbers I was dreadfully agitated. At one time I was seized with the idea, that all my late companions were safe, and that I was the only unfortunate wretch of the party that was doomed to suffer. In another paroxysm I was tormented with the thoughts of the ease with which I could have avoided the fatal gateway, had I been aware that I was on the road that passed it. With what bitterness

did I reproach myself for want of circumspection: in short, I found myself in a state of distraction. I endeavoured to tranquillize my mind with the hope of being able to get out of my present prison, or, at all events, of escaping from my guards on our march back into France; I had already got away from the most strict guards in the universe, the French *gens d'armerie.* These ideas proved to be a kind of salutary balsam to my tortured bosom. It is hardly possible for persons who have never experienced anything like the distress I had undergone, to form any idea of the dreadful manner in which the mind is agitated on such occasions.

I found myself excessively cold during the night. A severe frost and snow had set in; and at this season of the year I could not expect it to be otherwise. In the morning, at an early hour, an old lady (the gaoler's wife) presented me with a cup of coffee, which I eagerly swallowed; the poor woman felt very much for my distressed situation, and actually shed tears. I begged she

would provide me with materials for writing a letter to the commandant; her husband brought me them, and I remonstrated with the Cerberus on his cruelty in having me stripped of my clothes in a gaol (which, to my grief, I now discovered to be too secure), when he could have no idea of my being able to get away from it. I begged, at least, to have a neck handkerchief and cap returned to me, and desired he would order the money I had been deprived of, to be laid out in purchasing a coarse shirt and pair of stockings, which I very much wanted. I also requested I might be allowed one of the military surgeons to dress my feet, that were still in a very bad state: All these demands he had the kindness to grant. The secretary came and informed me, that I should be detained until they received orders from the government at Ulm, which would be in about twelve days; he expressed great sorrow for my misfortunes, and retired. Great consolation was this to a poor devil without clothes!

At length the surgeon came, and humanely dressed my sores; and he expressed his astonishment at how I could have travelled with my feet in so sad a condition. When I looked at their lacerated state, my astonishment was not less than his; nor was that astonishment lessened by the extreme pain that they now gave me. The mind at ease can scarcely form a conception of what the body can undergo when influenced by the stimuli of danger; and although I freely confess, that at this moment I enjoyed any thing rather than mental tranquillity, I was still amazed at how I could have walked such an immense distance with feet so swollen and so cut to pieces.

After the surgeon had quitted me, I went to bed, and I felt a little more calm in spirit; but vain were all my efforts to close my eyes. Pain would keep me awake, and busy thought, cheerless of the past, and hopeless of the future, would crowd into my restless mind.

In this state I lay till noon, when the old

lady, the gaoler's wife, brought me my dinner. It was a tolerably good meal, considering the quarters I was in. She informed me that I was allowed nothing but water to drink. This I considered very inhuman, as my miserable state required something more stimulating. I thought it unkind that the surgeon did not order me a small portion of wine as a medicine.

In this melancholy condition I received an unexpected consolation. A Swiss gentleman was confined in an adjacent cell, and he kindly sent me a few books, amongst which was the "Life of Frederick the Great," that interested me very much. I naturally expressed a wish to see my benefactor, but the old lady told me that there were strict orders to prevent all intercourse between prisoners. On this point she was inexorable. I was now supplied with a shirt and a pair of stockings; but the latter, though large, were totally useless to me, my feet being so sore, and swollen to such an extraordinary degree.

I need not say that I had now sufficient time on my hands for meditation. Again and again did my mind run over all my adventures and misfortunes. I began to moralise upon the vicissitudes incidental to human nature, and to reflect that our sufferings would heighten future joys, and teach us to feel for the miseries of others.

——— "Take physic, pomp,
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,"

would I frequently say to myself. By such reflections I often so exhausted myself that I felt drowsy; and in a state of lassitude, or rather exhaustion, I used to go to bed. Soon would I fall asleep; but such was the perturbed state of my mind, that sleep was to me neither balmy nor "Nature's sweet restorative," for it was feverish and fitful, and so crowded with frightful dreams and dismal phantasies, that I used to start out of my broken slumbers so agitated, that at length I arose more exhausted and distressed than when I had gone to bed. Sad is the

state when we awake from the shadowy miseries of sleep only to find them substantial realities.

At seven my kind old hostess brought me supper, made my bed, and took her leave, exhorting me to patience.

Eleven days passed in the same manner, except that latterly I prevailed upon my gaoler to deprive me of my breakfast, and to give me in lieu of it a half-pint of small wine at dinner and at supper, and to allow me a candle in the evening.

The Swiss gentleman at last managed to see me. He spoke a little English, and informed me that he had been in the Austrian service, and had had the honour of serving under His Royal Highness the Duke of York at Valenciennes, Dunkirk, and other places. He was confined for debt, had been in gaol eighteen months, and did not expect to be liberated for six months longer. He appeared to be very much surprised at the Bavarians using a British officer

so cruelly; and, after condoling with me a little, returned to his cell.

On the thirteenth morning, at daybreak, the gaoler appeared with breakfast and my clothes; and informed me, that I was instantly to prepare for my journey back into France,—that my escort would be at the door in a few minutes. He begged I would keep up my spirits. I assured him I was well pleased at the information, and in being removed from so solitary a habitation. I certainly cherished the hope of escaping on the road back, not imagining that I should be treated as a criminal going to be executed. I had scarcely swallowed my breakfast, when two military men were shewn into my apartment: the foremost holding in his hands an immense iron chain with shackles or fetters, and a large padlock. The sight of this apparatus destroyed every hope that had before presented itself with respect to my getting off; however, I pretended to take no notice of them. This man

spoke a little French, saluted me civilly, and asked, "If I were prepared?" "Yes," said I, "perfectly so." "I am sorry," resumed he, "to be under the necessity of using these machines. It is the commandant's orders; and, as you are an officer yourself, I need not observe how necessary it is to obey the orders of a superior. We are brothers of the volunteer corps of this town, named Schlatter, and brothers of the commandant's secretary, chosen on purpose to reconduct you into France, lest you might be ill-treated by soldiers of the line." I told him they were excessively kind, and desired them to proceed and do their duty; and added, that what I suffered was no dishonour to me, for the efforts I had made had been for the sake of serving my country, and I gloried in them. The commandant's secretary now joined the party, and expressed his satisfaction at his brothers being appointed to escort me. I pointed out to him the cruelty of putting so enormous a chain upon any human creature. He replied, "You have

so often escaped, sir, even from the *gens d'armerie* of France, and these are volunteers only, that the commandant thinks chaining you very necessary, and we have no small chains. There is a carriage ordered for your conveyance, and, consequently, the inconvenience will not be so very great."

A little more palaver followed. I talked of the dishonour and indignities inflicted upon an officer, and poured forth all the torrents of eloquence I could call to my aid; but every thing was in vain, the phlegmatic German stuck to his text of the chains: and, accordingly, my right arm and left leg were chained together, and the ends were securely fastened by a huge and clumsy padlock, proportioned to the links of the chain, and both seemed proportioned to the limbs of a Goliath or Hercules. I was now carried to the gaol door, and putting my head outside to take a gasp of fresh air, to which I had been so long a stranger, I beheld an immense concourse of people assembled, to catch a sight of the un-

fortunate prisoner, whom the commandant had thought proper thus thrice or triply to secure. The wondering crowd came to view what they thought a monster, for such reports had been spread of my miraculous escapes, and such exaggerated and fabulous accounts had been given of what I had achieved, that the ignorant populace believed that I was some demon, or at least a magician in disguise.

At last the hour of my departure arrived. I took my adieu of my gaoler, who had not exceeded his office, and then I took a most affectionate leave of the old woman, who was crying the whole time, and parted from me as if I had been her son whom she was never to see again. I frankly own, that I was deeply affected at the poor simple old creature's kindness. There are cases, in which neither old age nor the gaol can harden the heart.

My guards lifted me into the carriage, and one of them sat on each side, for they seemed to think that I might yet try to escape; as if the

ponderous chains and huge padlock had been silken bands fastened by some truelover's knot. "God bless you, my unfortunate son" (mynheer), cried the gaoler's kind old wife, bathed in tears. "God bless you, kind old mother," I replied. "Drive on," roared the guard to the postilion. Whack went the heavy whip over the shoulders of both horses, and away went our carriage, rattling over the stones, and through a dense crowd of people that seemed to think that I was some cloven-footed, evil spirit, that the commandant was obliged to get rid of in so extraordinary a way. In every street through which we passed, the windows were crowded with spectators, all wishing my guards a safe return, as if they either thought that they were bound to the most remote corner of the globe; or, that they were in the company of some wizard, that might play them an awkward trick on the road. The guards themselves seemed little at their ease; for although I was so heavily secured, they loaded their rifles, primed them, and looked significantly

at me—a hint of what I might expect if I became restive.

At noon, we stopped to change horses at a small town I had passed through, just before my unfortunate capture. My guards helped me out, and permitted me to lean on them as we went up stairs, for the weight of my chains rendered it impossible for me to walk alone. Our carriage, which had been a sort of gig, was now changed; and I found that the authorities were killing many birds with one stone, for my guards were the bearers of letter-bags, despatches, and government property.

Although, as I have already observed, one of my guards spoke French, such was the depressed state of my spirits, that I entered into little or no conversation with him. Sometimes, indeed, I asked him a question respecting his country, but it was only for the sake of dry information, that I might hereafter turn to advantage. Each question was drily put and as drily answered, and thus did my journey proceed.

At midnight we halted in a walled town, the name of which my guards concealed from me, and I was so well watched, that I could not ask the question, immaterial as it was, of any body else. I, however, was civilly informed, that I might go to bed here for two hours, and I as civilly or as satirically replied, "that a bed was no comfort to a man encumbered with heavy chains, and a ponderous padlock." If I were rational in nothing else, I was deemed rational in this; and accordingly, I was unpadlocked, unchained, and unmanacled, and allowed to go to bed; but so dangerous a character was I thought, that two police officers, in addition to my two guards, were stationed in my chamber to keep watch over me, whilst I slept or lay in bed, seating themselves one on each side of it. I need scarcely observe, that I never closed my eyes. If an eye were closed that night it must have been in the head of one of my guards, or in that of one of their assistants.

The time elapsed, and glad was I at the

coming of the cold damp dawn. I was again chained, and we were placed in another vehicle, and I discovered they were taking a more northerly direction towards *Strasbourg*. We had three relays before four in the afternoon, when we arrived at a small open town in *Wirtemberg*,* and stopped as usual at the post-house, which was also a tavern. We found a number of very genteel people there. I attracted (of course) the notice of every body; they appeared desirous and anxious to serve me, and reprobated very much the conduct of the Bavarians, for using a British officer with such cruelty. I was in great hopes of staying here all night, as there was at first a difficulty in procuring a carriage. However, the Bavarians did not deem this prudent, and they got a common waggon, which was filled with straw, and placed me in the centre between them; they were not wrong in doing so, for had

* *Tutlingen* was the name of this small town; it had suffered greatly by fire, and had been lately entirely new built. It is situated on the *Danube*, thirty-three miles N.W. of *Constance*.

I remained there that night, I certainly should have been rescued.

At midnight we changed our waggon at *Rotheweil.* At dawn we again changed, and at four in the afternoon we passed through *Gegenbach;* * and about midnight arrived at *Offenburgh,*† a fortified town in *Baden,* and only five or six leagues from *Strasbourg.* Here we went to bed, my guards having first placed their bedsteads on each side of mine.

My mind was too much occupied with the misery that awaited me, to admit of sleep. The dungeons, in which I was perhaps inevitably doomed to drag out a miserable existence, appeared to my imagination with all their horrors. *Bitche* was the place that had been originally

* *Gegenbach,* a small city in the circle of Suabia, and in *Mordenaw;* it was a free Imperial city, under the protection of the House of Austria, formerly: it is seated on the river *Kintzig,* fifteen miles S.E. of *Strasbourg.*

† *Offenburgh* was also formerly under the sanction of the House of Austria, but belongs at present to the Duke of *Baden;* it is a strong walled town, situated on the river *Kintzig,* about twenty miles E. of *Baden,* and had suffered greatly in the late war between Austria and France.

allotted for me, and I was of opinion, from the different accounts that I had received of this wretched place, that a prisoner's life was prolonged, only to make his punishment the greater. My depression of spirits became extreme, and even my guards greatly commiserated my distress, and frequently expressed their regret at its being their lot to deliver me again into the hands of my enemies.

In justice to these, my conductors, I must say, that they used their authority with as much mercy as possible. They anticipated, as well as they could, all my wants; they were willing, as far as they could consistently with my safe keeping, or what they thought, my safe keeping, to comply with all my wishes; they let me have every refreshment that I desired; and, in fact, in every respect they made me as comfortable as possible, under our relative circumstances and positions. When I reflect on these and many similar facts, and above all, when I reflect on the kind old wife of the gaoler of Lindau, I am bound to say, that I

found the Germans generally honest and kind-hearted, and the females of that country particularly so.

At eight the next morning, we quitted Offenburgh for Strasbourg, and at eleven we breakfasted at Khel. This was our last stage, and here we procured our last change of horses. We crossed the bridge at one, and were most strictly searched by custom-house officers. All they found upon me was the heavy chains, and the as heavy padlock. Would to heavens they had deemed those contraband goods, and had deprived me of them! These fellows, as well as the sentries, were enraged when I told them that they had not been so very particular a few mornings before, when I had passed the bridge without their deigning to speak to me. I put the latter into a most furious passion, when I quizzed them upon their muffling themselves up in their warm cloaks, and keeping themselves in their sentry-boxes, whilst I was slipping by them amidst the cattle. How mad they were!—but

the joke now was all against myself, for in half an hour I was delivered up to the French *gens d'armerie,* and I soon found myself securely lodged in the military gaol of Strasbourg. Thus ended all my hopes.

The keeper of this prison was, thank God, excessively civil and kind; and civility and kindness are by no means common qualities amongst the gaolers of this most civilized and polite nation. He shewed me into an apartment, where there was a tolerably good bed, and even asked me if I wished to have a fire. A good fire in a damp room of a gaol, on a bitterly frosty day of December, was certainly a great addition to a poor prisoner's comforts, and I frankly replied, that there was nothing, under his roof at least, that I should like so much, as to see a blazing hearth; but I as honestly added, that I had not one farthing to pay for it. The little money that I had possessed had been almost all spent by the Bavarians in getting me a shirt and a pair of stockings, and I saw them give the remainder, which was a mere

trifle, to the French *gens d'armes*, when they handed me over to their custody. "In that case," replied the feeling gaoler, "you shall go to my apartment and warm yourself, and you shall want for nothing that I can help you to." This was a very different reception from what I had anticipated. It is astonishing what an effect kindness has upon the heart, and especially upon the heart of the afflicted and miserable. This man's charity quite disarmed me from any thoughts of escape; I could not even harbour such an idea, whilst enjoying his commiseration and benevolence. It would have been a desecration of hospitality, a vile requital of kindness that might have steeled his feelings against all future prisoners. In fact, nothing could have induced me, by any misconduct, to have brought so good a man under rebuke or punishment from the authorities above him.

Shivering with cold, I left my dark, damp room, and soon found myself in a very comfortable apartment, and my eyes were greeted with

the sight of a blazing fire, whilst the crackling of the burning logs, " discoursed sweet music to my ears."

My frank and charitable Samaritan soon gave me a reason why the benevolence of his nature was now poured forth so cordially towards me. He was an old soldier, and had twice been made a prisoner by the English during the last war. He had been captured up the Mediterranean, and on both occasions the English, he said, had treated him kindly; and he conceived that he was only paying off a debt of gratitude in availing himself of an opportunity to be kind to an English officer in distress. Never was logic more conclusive to my mind, or never did a debtor and creditor account of favours received and returned sound more delightfully to my ears; and I can only wish that all my fellow-men would reason as soundly in favour of benevolence as this honest gaoler.

He introduced me to his wife, a German

woman, who insisted on my taking a seat near the fire; and the frank, hospitable creature, seemed to vie with her husband in mitigating my sufferings.

After the very many hours I had been almost perishing with the cold, and cramped and numbed with my chains, I need not say how comfortable I found myself. I supped with my worthy host and hostess, and next day I breakfasted and dined at their table.

This day the lieutenant of the *gens d'armerie* of the Strasbourg district, with another officer, came to interrogate me with respect to my escape, the direction I had taken, and all the other circumstances of my flight. I was frank and communicative, and they both were very much astonished at the sufferings I had endured, and expressed their wonder at my having been able to cross the bridge of Khel without detection. They informed me, to my grief, that Bitche was the place of my destination; and that at daylight the next morning I should be

escorted to that fortress, in company with eleven Corsican soldiers who had lately deserted from their regiment at Deuxponts, carrying with them their arms, accoutrements, and knapsacks. These unfortunate fellows, they added, were all to be shot. I must confess, that I by no means liked to travel in such company; but my informants assured me, that although they were sensible of the indignity, and sorry for it, it was out of their power to prevent it, and that I must submit with patience to my fate. I had only to express my resignation with the best grace I could assume. They also observed, "That it had been remarked that the major part of the prisoners of war who had escaped, or attempted to escape, from the prisons or *dépôts* of France, were Irish." I replied, "That I was not aware of the proportion they bore to other officers attempting their escape." I was afterwards informed that the Emperor Napoleon was very much enraged at the sum demanded for conducting back the "*aspirant Anglais*," O'Brien; and added, that the *aspirans*

gave his government more trouble than all the other prisoners of war.

This evening, December 18th, I passed, as I had the preceding evening, with the gaoler and his wife by their comfortable fireside. At day-break he came to desire me to prepare for my journey. His good and hospitable wife had an ample breakfast prepared for me; and as the morning was excessively cold, and as the snow fell heavily, she insisted upon my taking a glass of spirits, and upon my putting some bread in my pocket for my journey. This was really a comfort; for I was allowed only the hard black ammunition bread, which was so offensive, that nothing but extreme hunger could ever induce me to taste it.

The gaoler, being well aware of what sort of dungeons I should be placed in during my journey to Bitche, told me he had received only nine livres, about seven shillings and sixpence sterling, which was all that had been handed over to the *gens d'armes* as my property by the

Bavarians; and, as my funds were so very low, he would demand only two shillings and sixpence for every thing I had received at his table; and he gave the remainder of my money to my guard, to advance as I might have occasion for it. I felt grateful for this man's generosity and disinterestedness; his was, indeed, the most reasonable bill I ever had paid in France, and I requested he would take more, as I was certain it must be in consequence of my reduced finances that his demands were so moderate: however, he resolutely refused, so I took my leave of him and his wife,* and got into my place, which was by the eleventh Corsican's side, to whom I was chained and handcuffed, whilst another chain was also passed through the whole of the party, which completely linked us all together. About noon our guards were changed. The brigade that now escorted us consisted of the most cruel scoundrels I ever beheld. They placed the

* This is the person I alluded to as an exception, and the kind gaoler at Arras, to all others that I met with in France.

chain round my neck, under my handkerchief; and, on my observing to them that it must certainly be their design to strangle me by putting the chain on so tight, they took in another link, d——d me for a rascally Englishman, and clapped on an immense padlock, which was dangling as an ornament under my chin the whole way; they afterwards screwed on my handcuffs until the skin was literally twisted off the wrists. They knew my name perfectly, and that I had lately escaped from my guards.

At night we arrived at Haguenau* gaol. Here I found a Swiss soldier in confinement: he had lately received his discharge from the British service, had come over from Copenhagen, was arrested in Germany, and had thence been transported into France, where they accused him of being a spy. His passport, discharge, and papers, were taken from him, and transmitted

* A small fortified town, situated on the river Mottee. It was formerly imperial, and had been taken and retaken several times in the late wars between the Austrians and kings of France. It is four or five leagues north of Strasbourg.

to Paris. On being discovered talking to me, he was carried away to a dungeon, and not suffered to come out until I left the gaol, which was the next morning at daylight.

We were placed in the same order, with this exception — the chain was passed over the shoulder and under the arm, like a soldier's belt, instead of round the neck. In quitting the town of Haguenau, I had a view of the miller's house, and that part of the river which I had crossed some nights before. How different were my sensations from those I had then felt! At about five in the afternoon we arrived at an open town, Nider Bronn. The cold was very intense—snowing hard all day: for our comfort, we were put into one of the most filthy dungeons that ever mortal beheld, with scarcely room to turn round, and only a small hole in the door to admit air. The Corsicans appeared to feel a great deal for my situation; and observed, "that they ought not to complain, when *a British officer was used in so horrid a manner.*"

They were permitted to go out of the dungeon to get some refreshments, which the charitable inhabitants sent them, but the *sacré Anglais* was not suffered to move; and I had great difficulty to procure a morsel of food, which was handed me through the air hole, and for which they charged double price. My companions soon returned, and they placed their knapsacks for me to lie on. This air hole was so small, and there was such an abominable smell, that I never expected to survive it. Two of these unfortunate wretches were seized with an illness, a sort of cholera, which continued the whole night, and added greatly to the *mauvaise odeur* we already had. I never passed a more dreadful night. The misery I was in is beyond description: the night appeared to have no end. At last the cheering moment arrived, which was announced by the usual sounds—rattling of keys, creaking of doors, bolts, &c. A *gen d'arme* presented himself, and with a gruff, overbearing voice, desired us to prepare for our march: he had

very little difficulty in getting this summons obeyed; but he told us we must first of all clean out our cell! "Where is the Englishman?" roared the brute; "let him do that part by himself!" I was full of disgust and indignation; and, advancing boldly towards him, I resolutely told him that I would not,—that I had not caused the evil, and that I would not even assist. The fellow was getting into a furious rage, and I doubted not but that the consequences would have been serious to me, when, fortunately, the soldiers interfered, and with propriety and honesty declared that all that I had said was true, and as they had caused the evil, it was but just that they alone should remove it. The poor fellows having cleaned out the cell, we proceeded on our journey, in the manner of the preceding day.

The two sick soldiers, though the poor wretches looked extremely ill, were not exempted from their chains and fetters, although the weather was excessively inclement, and the

heavy snow was drifted in our faces by a fierce and hard wind. My wrists were much swollen, and began to get extremely painful. However, this was my last stage; and, although the object of the journey was not calculated to make me rejoice at the little way I had to travel, I had, at least, the satisfaction of looking forward to my deliverance from my odious chains and painful handcuffs.

The two sick soldiers were evidently in a high state of fever; and, wherever they saw a frozen rivulet, they entreated that they might be allowed to halt, to procure either ice or water: but the flinty-hearted brutes were deaf to all supplication, and the wretched sufferers were obliged to eat handfuls of snow in order to allay their raging thirst. The guard would not even condescend to unchain them on any occasion, however urgent, and the poor creatures were exposed to every inconvenience. The cruel, savage behaviour of these monsters, exceeded every thing I had witnessed; and yet I had seen

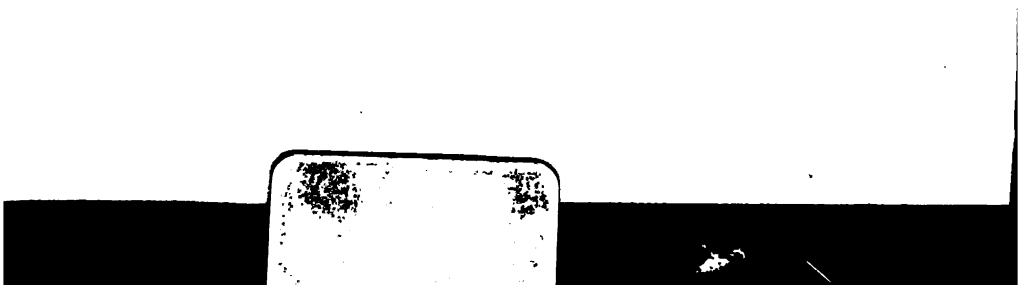
and experienced enough to make nature shudder: they also accused the poor wretches of being traitors to their countryman, Napoleon.

At about noon, on the 21st of December, 1807, the high turrets and massive towers of the gloomy fortress in which I was going to be incarcerated, presented themselves to my sight. Their very appearance was sufficient to strike

The Author entering the Fortress of Bitche.

the mind with horror; and I cannot but believe that the engineer had this object in view when

he gave such outward forms to his structure. The prospect of being shut up in that detestable fortress, perhaps for the remainder of my days, could only be relieved by the probability that my length of life would be shortened by the nature of my imprisonment. Death itself was preferable to protracted persecution, and I sometimes devoutly wished to be at rest. In this train of thought and feeling, I proceeded; and so absorbed was I by my affliction, that I was almost unconscious of any objects or circumstances around me, until I was roughly awakened from my stupor, and found myself in the centre of the fortress of Bitche.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY MOYES AND BARCLAY, CASTLE STREET,
LEICESTER SQUARE.